



Arm The Spirit

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For A Free And Independent Kurdistan!



Inside: News and Documents from the Kurdish Liberation Struggle * Interview with Dr. Luis Nieves Falcón * Fascist Violence and Anti-Fascist Resistance in Germany * Interview with Abdul Majid - Black Liberation Army Political Prisoner * Shawnee Unit - A Control Unit for Women * Resistance at F.C.I. Lexington * Excerpt from "Imperialist Peace Is War!" by the Communist Prisoners' Collective Wotta Sitta * Interview with Red Army Fraction prisoners; Lutz Taufer, Karl Heinz-Dellwo and Knut Folkerts * Part One of the August '92 RAF Declaration * "Letter from Spain" * Also: News and Info on Devrimci Sol, Ploughshares activists, ETA arrests in Uruguay, Black/New Afrikan political prisoners/POW's and much more...

We're Still Here!

After an absence of many months we're finally back with a new issue. As always, the usual problems seem to plague us, with money being our biggest nemesis. Our last issue came out August 1992, and since then we have slowly been putting together this issue. As one month turned into another, we realized that a lot of the information and articles in this issue were becoming dated. This was particularly problematic in light of the fact that we are a bi-monthly publication and we attempt to be up-to-date in our coverage of various revolutionary struggles. With this in mind, we decided to produce a double-sized issue which could be considered an overview of the various struggles that we focus on in the Arm The Spirit. Therefore we have compiled various statements, interviews, news and analysis on the Kurdish liberation struggle, political prisoners in both North America and Europe, urban guerrilla organizations such as the Red Army Faction and Devrimci Sol, and more, all from within the last year or so. As 1992 was also an important year for indigenous peoples in this hemisphere, we have also included information on the various struggles and campaigns of "500 Years of Resistance". We have also attempted to tie some of this together and show the interconnectedness of the various struggles with the inclusion of statements from both Italian and German political prisoners. Hopefully we have achieved this to some degree.

While we have been slow to finish this issue, we have been politically active in other ways. As some of you may have noticed from our last issue, we now have an electronic mail address. Not only are we able to send and receive information via electronic mail but we're able to gain access to vast amounts of information within the global computer network Internet. Within Internet there exists a large number of newsgroups which are accessible to anyone with Internet access and an e-mail address. A growing number of leftists, including us, are taking advantage of this technology and using various newsgroups to provide information on any number of struggles. We attempt to post information on regular basis onto two newsgroups: "misc.activism.progressive" and "alt.politics.radical-left". We encourage comrades with access to Internet to read these newsgroups as well as getting in touch with us via e-mail. We've also made Arm The Spirit available in electronic form and can send it via e-mail to anyone who requests it. As well, two prison-oriented publications, "Prison News Service" and "Prison Legal News" are now online and are available

from our e-mail address.

We wish to end this "editorial" with a correction and a call for solidarity. First off, in our last issue we reprinted a "Revolutionary Cells (RZ)" communique from a group that claimed to carry out an action against fascists. We have learned that this action was not successful and was not carried out by the RZ's. Comrades in Europe have informed us that the bombs that had been placed did not detonate and if this had occurred, people may have been injured or killed. This is not the practice of the RZ's. If people could be injured or killed as the result of an armed action by them, they will not carry it out. As well, the communique has passages that were directly taken from an article in a leftist magazine. While no one is sure of the identity of those who placed the bomb and released the communique, it is not improbable that fascists, or even the German secret services, were responsible. One, after all, need only to look to the Piazza Fontana bombing in 1969, in Italy, which killed 16 people. A bombing which was blamed on leftists but was carried out by fascists in collaboration with the Italian secret services.

Finally, we wish to point out the vital need to support two New Afrikan prisoners of war - Geronimo ji Gaga Pratt and Sundiata Acoli. These comrades share a similar history of struggle and resistance for which they have suffered severe repression from the U.S. government. As participants in Black liberation struggle in the 60's and 70's, both Sundiata and Geronimo were targeted by COINTELPRO, an FBI counter-intelligence program designed to neutralize and destroy Black liberation organizations, most notably the Black Panther Party (BPP) and the Black Liberation Army (BLA). As a result many BPP and BLA members were killed and many more imprisoned. Some of these comrades still remain in prison and the struggle to free them still continues. Both Sundiata and Geronimo now face opportunities to be released on parole. But this will not occur without extraordinary pressure and we urge comrades everywhere to undertake any form of action they are capable of to help achieve Sundiata's and Geronimo's freedom. Information can be found within this issue about their situation, except that in Geronimo's case his parole hearing did not take place in December 1992. It has been postponed and a new date has not been set. As well, a specific date has not been set for Sundiata. For up-to-date information send us a letter, fax or get in touch by e-mail - and keep up the pressure!

Arm The Spirit - January 1993

Some Useful Information...

Editor: Gabriel Dumont

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With this issue of Arm The Spirit we are now offering paid advertising space. This is one of the steps we've taken to improve our financial situation so that we can have a regular publishing schedule. We reserve the right to refuse ad space to groups or organizations that we feel would be inappropriate in our publication. At the same time we are also willing to trade ad space with publications with whom we feel some affinity with.

1/3 page	
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War In Kurdistan

1992 has been a decisive year for the Kurdish liberation struggle, particularly in North-West Kurdistan. The Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK) and the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan (ERNK) have been instrumental in developing this struggle and their strength and ability to achieve this is a measure of support they have from the Kurdish people. One of the clearest examples of this occurs during the celebrations of the Kurdish New Year - Newroz - every March. This year, like the many before it, saw Newroz celebrations in many Kurdish cities and towns turn into militant demonstrations in support of the PKK and the struggle to free and reunite all parts of occupied Kurdistan. The Turkish state responded with brutal attacks on the Kurdish people - dozens were killed and thousands were detained under martial law for many days. The Turkish army then tried to justify these measures by claiming that they had been attacked by the military wing of the PKK - the People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan (ARGK). They further used this lie as an excuse to attack many cities, in particular, the city of Simak which was put under siege the day after Newroz, resulting in many deaths and heavy damage to the city itself.

The Special War Means A "Scorched Earth" Policy

This attack on Simak was a turning point in the war for national liberation, as repression by the Turkish state has clearly shifted from its "Special War" counter-insurgency operations to all-out war. This escalation has manifested itself in a 'scorched earth' policy which has seen the razing of towns and cities such as Kulp, Varto, Hani, and Cizre and others. The second and even more brutal attack, on Simak in August has been by far the clearest example of Turkish atrocities against the Kurdish people. Starting August 18/92, Turkish forces blocked all roads in and out of Simak and went on a 3 day rampage, claiming that the town was controlled by 1500 ARGK guerrillas. Women, children, and elders were killed and wounded by the hundreds. Houses and buildings were torched and animals were slaughtered. Seventy per-cent of the city was destroyed and many people were left homeless and destitute. There were no guerrilla units in the city. At present the city is devastated and many of its inhabitants have become refugees. Rebuilding efforts are underway but due to the continued Turkish presence and repression these efforts are proceeding slowly.

While the army has been carrying out full-scale warfare, it has also continued to carry out a variety of counter-insurgency operations. Contraguerrillas have been organized to assassinate sympathetic journalists and politicians, PKK militants, and other supporters of the Kurdish liberation struggle. This has included the assassination of writer/journalist Huseyin Deniz, and of Musa Anter, who was a journalist with the progressive newspaper 'Ozgur Gundem' and a noted writer considered by many to be "the grand old man of Kurdish culture." He was the fifth journalist from this newspaper to be assassinated in 1992. In an obvious show of contempt for their deaths, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel stated that "these are not the journalists you think they are. They are all militants." In other words, in the view of the Turkish government, their deaths were justified. On June 11, contraguerrillas took 15 Kurdish patriots off a bus which was returning from Hizan, and executed them. They also attacked a train station the next day in Mus, injuring six and killing a small child. These and many other attacks take place on a consistent basis, often in conjunction with military operations.

Arbitrary detentions and mass arrests of Kurdish militants and activists continue to be used to quell dissent and support for an independent Kurdistan. On September 25, 11 members of the People's Labour Party (HEP) were arrested on the orders of the National Security Council - which includes the Prime Minister, Army chiefs and certain cabinet ministers. The HEP is a progressive political party which supports Kurdish rights; in the 1991 elections it elected 22 Kurdish MPs to parliament. The arrest of the HEP members was based on the view of the National Security Council that it would take "legal measures against those democratic institutions and media which support separatism and work against the unitary state structure, and thus have no constitutional or legal basis."

Further, disinformation is used to falsely implicate the PKK and ARGK in atrocities and attacks that are actually carried out by the army or contraguerrillas. For example, the murder of the 15 Kurdish patriots mentioned above was blamed on the PKK in an attempt to discredit them in the eyes of the Kurdish people. As well there have been numerous attempts to turn international opinion against them. The Turkish government has accused the PKK of bombing the British consulate in Istanbul and of attempting to shoot down an Arab airliner travelling to Saudi Arabia. The PKK has denied these charges stating that "it is not their way of operating and neither is it in their interest." They state that it is the Turkish police and the contraguerrillas who have carried out these attacks.

Counterinsurgency operations of this kind are used both to instill fear in the Kurdish population and to deter the population from supporting the PKK. All of these attempts have failed and support for Kurdish independence continues to flourish.

Kurdish Collaborators With Turkish Colonialism

In Iraqi-occupied Kurdistan the two leading political forces in the region, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iraq (KDP), have consistently shown themselves to be the enemies of an independent Kurdistan. They have arrested, tortured and killed PKK supporters and members, turned them over to the Turkish military, and passed on information about PKK activities to Turkish and imperialist agents who they allow to operate in south Kurdistan. In response to this, the ARGK imposed an embargo on border trade at the Turkish-Iraqi frontier on July 29th. This was not aimed at the Kurdish people in the south but against the joint trade carried out between the Turkish state and the KDP. Instead the PKK wishes to forge better economic, social and political ties between the people of north and south Kurdistan without the interference of the Turkish state and its KDP-PUK collaborators.

The KDP-PUK retaliated by coordinating, with the Turkish military, an offensive against PKK/ARGK bases in south Kurdistan in October. Heavy clashes occurred between ARGK guerrillas and KDP-PUK peshmergas (Kurdish name for 'guerrilla') in Lolan, Sheranis, Batufa, Zakho, Haftanin and other areas. When the fighting began many peshmergas refused to fight against their own people and a number went over the ARGK side. Also, splits began occur within KDP-PUK forces with the resignations of ministers from both parties who stated that the "clashes only helped the Turkish state." On October 22, the PKK was able to prove conclusively that collaboration was taking place between KDP-PUK forces and the Turkish military. In an ARGK raid on a

An Interview With The General Secretary Of The PKK, Abdullah Ocalan

PKK General Secretary Abdullah Ocalan: "We will develop the revolutionary war to counter the imperialist plot in south Kurdistan"

General Secretary, how do you evaluate the developments in south Kurdistan?

We are well aware that the enemy has intensified his attacks on us. The all-out offensive of the Turkish state dates back to the National Security Council and Cabinet meetings held in Diyarbakir at the end of August. A consensus has been arrived at between the parties in the Turkish Parliament and diplomatic endeavours have been made to cut off supposed ties with Iran and Syria. They then tried to put the southern collaborationist forces into the breach. The basis for this is Demirel's phrase "to break the back" of our activities in south Kurdistan. We know that they have been preparing such a plan for a long time now. For various reasons they timed it for October. By securing the approval of the U.S. and Europe, and even taking into account the U.S. elections they made their preparations accordingly. Barzani's statement: "Turkey gave me seven days, I have to succeed" proves the reality of this plan. The timing of the meeting of the Iraqi opposition was also part of this plan. They had hoped to defeat us by the 23rd of October, but the failure of the peshmergas and the lack of success of the Turkish offensive has resulted in the postponement of this meeting. The fact that the Turkish army entered the fray in the last few days proves that the collaborators were unable to deliver the goods. We will develop the struggle on all fronts against these plans.

If you are victorious in this war, how do you see future developments?

If we come out on top it will mean Turkey is staring defeat in the face and it will have to withdraw. Kurdistan will then be free, to a great extent. We will give our all and create a free Kurdistan.

Our reporters in the region inform us that the peshmergas are unwilling to fight. What is your opinion about this?

This is clearly the case, that the peshmergas have no intention of fighting. They are being forced to fight. In a prolonged war the collaborationist forces would lose the support of the people and the peshmerga fighters. These forces have put all their fighters at the disposal of the Turkish units. If the Turkish units fail they, too, will collapse. For this reason we do not see the clashes in the south as a PKK-Peshmerga conflict, rather we see it as the liberation struggle of the people of the south.

So can we say that you are going to open a front in south Kurdistan?

The two fronts are linked. We cannot develop the front in the north without doing the same in the south and vice versa. The drawing of the Turkish army into the south makes things easier for us in the north. We will draw them deeper into the swamp

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meeting of KDP-PUK commanders, seized documents confirmed that a trilateral committee existed which directed the operations of the peshmergas. This committee was composed of one PUK commander, a KDP commander and senior Turkish military major and had direct access to the Turkish High Command who were directing military operations.

During the initial offensive, ARGK forces were on the defensive, facing heavy attacks in many areas. Despite rumours by the media, of a withdrawal and surrender, the ARGK/PKK did not lose any ground and towards the end of October were able to mount an offensive. In early November, the PKK announced the lifting of the embargo on border trade after a political settlement with the forces of the KDP-PUK. Terms of the settlement allowed the ARGK/PKK to continue to operate freely in south Kurdistan - clearly showing the inability of the KDP-PUK/Turkish military forces to achieve their desired goal.

The Struggle Moves Forward

Despite massive repression by the Turkish state of the Kurdish people, the liberation struggle continues to grow. On a military level, the ARGK continues to carry out many effective and sometimes spectacular actions against the Turkish military and police forces. For example, on September 29, 1250 ARGK guerrillas simultaneously attacked 3 Turkish military garrisons in the Semdinli region. The attack, which lasted for over 7 hours completely destroyed the garrisons as well as killing close to 500 Turkish soldiers. They also shot down a helicopter and captured numerous weapons while suffering minimal losses. On November 10, they attacked the main military garrison in the town of Hani. The 200 ARGK guerrillas, who used rockets and mortars during the attack, completely destroyed the garrison when they hit the ammunition dump. When military reinforcements entered the town, they were attacked by the guerrillas who destroyed 4 tanks and 2 armoured personnel carriers. Once again the ARGK suffered minimal losses, while over 100 soldiers and police were killed during the attack.

Their most recent action, on December 14, saw a raid on the Special Forces headquarters in Diyarbakir which resulted in the death of 27 police officers. At the same time an ARGK unit ambushed a military convoy on the road from Hani to Diyarbakir.

Politically, the Kurdish independence movement has been working towards the founding of a National Parliament of Kurdistan. According to the Kurdistan National Assembly Preparation Committee, the National Assembly of Kurdistan "will be the highest body representing the people of Kurdistan. The assembly will pass laws in all fields which interest the Kurdish nation and be the only body representing them in the international arena". This body aims to be the legitimate representative body of the Kurdish people all over the world. To this end, elections were held to elect delegates in all the occupied areas of Kurdistan - Syria, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, as well as among Turkish communities in the CIS and Europe, between November 20-22, 1992. For the first time in their history the Kurdish people were able to express their free will through these elections. In Europe, 153 delegates were elected representing the many different aspects of the exiled Kurdish community. Of these, 27 were women and 3 of the delegates came from south Kurdistan. Almost 50% of those eligible to vote participated in the elections, which was hampered by inexperience and technical difficulties, as well as by misinformation and propaganda spread by Turkish and pro-Turkish European media. We do not as yet know the results of voting held in occupied Kurdistan due to the many difficulties in holding elections in a fragmented nation. In the second round of the European elections, held on December 19-20, 15 MP's were elected by the 153 delegates. These 15 MP's represent the Kurdish people living in Europe in the Kurdistan National Parliament.

The Future?

As the situation intensifies in north-west Kurdistan, support for the PKK and Kurdish liberation struggle increases correspondingly to growing Turkish state repression. In the words of two Kurds, "Every person in the

region now supports the rebels. Everyone, almost without exception", and "Some used to be uncertain, but not after Simak."

After the Gulf War and the break-up of the Soviet Union, Turkey has set its sights on becoming the major power in the Middle East as well as extending its influence throughout the region. While denying that it plans to annex the Turkish-speaking republics of the former Soviet Union, Turkey is making economic and political overtures to, among others, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. As Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel stated, "...we saw [...] a Turkish world, at least in people's intentions, ...a commonality that can't be denied." At the same time, the recent collaboration with the KDP-PUK in south Kurdistan, is perceived as a move by Turkey to obtain Iraqi Kurdistan for itself. Because of Turkey's strategic importance as a NATO ally, Turkish expansionism falls into line with western imperialist/NATO strategy. An indication of this is the recent redeployment this year of NATO military hardware from Central Europe to Turkey. With the ending of the Cold War, Europe, and Germany in particular, is no longer considered a frontline in an 'East/West' confrontation. As the world situation increasingly shifts to a 'North/South' confrontation, Turkey assumes the role of a frontline in imperialist domination. Clearly then, the Kurdish liberation struggle poses a serious obstacle to the implementation of imperialism's "New World Order". The formation of an independent Kurdistan would not only seriously disrupt - and perhaps even destroy - the Turkish state but it would also destabilize the entire region as uprisings by Kurdish people in Iran, Iraq and Syria would most likely be occurring at the same. Further, the liberation of the Kurdish nation would be a powerful example and signal for other colonized peoples in the region, particularly the Palestinians. Of course, Turkey and its imperialist allies cannot allow this happen and will use any force necessary to crush the Kurdish liberation struggle.

For us, concrete solidarity with the Kurdish struggle, means building resistance here in the imperialist centres and opposing its aggression by any means necessary.

ERNK European Representatives' Statement

We are making the following statement as a party to the clashes occurring at the present time between the "National United Independence Front of Kurdistan" and the treacherous KDP and PUK supported by Turkey.

After the Gulf War the "Poised Hammer" military force, led by the U.S., was sent to Kurdistan to fill the power vacuum in Iraq and to prevent any potential developments in the Middle East. Turkey approved of this military force which was part of a common regional plan of the Western States. Turkey wanted to benefit from the advantages offered by this situation to crush the movement in northern Kurdistan.

Turkey began to develop a policy in line with these developments. First they claimed to defend the interest of the Kurds. They then made contact with Talabani and Barzani and invited them to Ankara. They were issued with Turkish diplomatic passports. Turkey provides economic, military and political support to these forces.

This fake "love of the Kurds" from a country whose chief of staff states "there are no Kurds in Turkey" and which kills tens of Kurds every day, flattens towns like Simak, Cukureca and Kulp and starts proceedings to try Kurdish deputies under legislation which carries the death penalty is all part of a bloody plan.

Talabani and Barzani started their preparations to attack the PKK after receiving support at meetings in Ankara and Washington last month. The date of the "ultimatum" was established at the meeting in Ankara.

Talabani returned to Kurdistan accompanied by a group of Turkish officers.

The clashes occurring in southern Kurdistan are the result of an assault, the preparations for which were made previously. The PKK is not the aggressor but is exercising its legitimate right of self-defence against these forces' collaborationist and treacherous attacks.

We have explained many times that this situation was being incited by the colonialist, imperialist states, particularly Turkey, but despite this they are imposing a war of annihilation on our people, in alliance with Turkey.

We repeat that the PKK is not in favour of these clashes. However, it is determined to carry out policies in line with the interests of the people of Kurdistan. We will continue to defend ourselves against attacks. The PKK is waging its war and its defence on the soil of its own country, Kurdistan, for which its goal is independence, not the soil of another country. For this reason it is not possible for it to leave the land and positions for which it has given many lives. In 1991 we defended this land against attacks by Saddam and Turkey and in the process hundreds of our members were martyred, but the KDP and PUK deserted their people and ran away. We would like to stress that we have the means necessary to defend ourselves against these forces.

At the moment violent clashes are continuing in an area from Haftanin, near Zakho, to Hakurke, near the

Iranian border, The National United Independence Front of Kurdistan announced that it would resist these attacks with all the power at its disposal. This Front is composed of the PKK, PAK and forces and individuals who have left the PUK and KDP. Since the clashes began on October 1st, 9 PKK guerrillas have been martyred and 20 PAK members have been killed in the towns of Zakho and Suleimaniye. Around 200 losses have been inflicted on the KDP and PUK forces in the Zakho and Hakurke areas. 20 KDP members and 6 Turkish officers have been captured. The Turkish officers will be presented to the press in the areas where they were captured.

Since October 6th, an embargo has been imposed on southern Kurdistan and all roads leading to Turkey have been taken under the control of the Front with who the initiative in the clashes now lies. Protest marches against the attacks are spreading in towns like Zakho and Suleimaniye. While some peshmerga leaders are going over to the Independence Front along with the fighters under their command, at least 1000 peshmergas have given up their weapons and withdrawn.

The aggressors claim that "the PKK's presence in the area leads to Turkish air attacks and the Kurdish villages have been destroyed and the people have left." We have to point out that the Turkish State is responsible for these attacks and that it is they who should be called to account. Also the PKK did not come from outer space.

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ETA Militants Arrested In Uruguay

Montevideo, Uruguay - On May 15, 1992, police in this city arrested a total of 28 persons, 6 of them Uruguayan, the rest Basques accused of being members of ETA, the Basque liberation organization. A lawyer and his secretary were among those arrested, accused of obtaining false papers for the Basques. The other Uruguayans were a dentist and his wife; whose names were in one of the Basque's address book, the teacher of a five year old Basque child, and his son-in-law.

The police called this Operation Alligator and the arrests were the culmination of a two year old investigation. The Basques were only charged with violating certain Uruguayan laws pertaining to the use and possession of false documents. At their first hearing a judge released all the Uruguayans and 9 of the Basques. Several of the Basques are accused of participating in armed actions in Spain.

Uruguayan law prohibits the extradition of foreigners accused of political crimes or common crimes with political overtones. All of the Basques have requested political asylum and it appears unlikely they will be extradited to Spain.

The Basques were all employed by a Basque restaurant in Montivideo. Uruguayan military intelligence maintained surveillance over the Basques (in violation of Uruguayan law which requires judicial permission for lengthy investigation) since 1988, at the request of the Spanish government. The Basques in question were all

"retired" militants. The position of the army was not to disturb the Basques as long as they restricted themselves to commercial activities, which in addition to the restaurant, consisted of exporting raw materials, and another restaurant.

This changed in April of 1991 when a grocery store was robbed by a Tupamaro and the military determined that his lover, Lourdes Garayalde, was one of the Basque militants. The military reached an agreement with the Basques that they would not be disturbed as long as they didn't participate in illegal activities. Thus Garayalde was twice arrested and released despite having false identity papers.

The arrests took place while the sub-secretary of Spanish security was in Uruguay. The arrests are believed to be the result of Spanish pressure. The arrests in Uruguay also coincide with the arrests in France of ETA's top leadership.

In Uruguay the arrests have caused much commotion, because they show that the police and military are still deeply involved in surveillance and repression of political activists and the left in general. At the same time there is a resurgence of right-wing death-squad activity. Given the unlikelihood of any of the Basques being imprisoned in Uruguay or extradited to Spain, the arrests, with attendant massive publicity, are seen as reminders to the Uruguayan left that they live in a death-squad democracy.

Palestinian Deportation Case Tests Immigration Law

In early November, 1992, a deportation trial against two Palestinians, Khader Hamide and Michel Shehadeh, began in Los Angeles which marks the first test of a controversial U.S. immigration law which the government says denies non-citizens the constitutionally protected rights to free speech and association.

According to their lawyers, if the government prevails in its claim that it can deport the two men for raising money for Palestinian causes, all non-citizens campaigning for social change in their native lands would be liable for deportation.

Hamide and Shehadeh, both longtime residents of the U.S. were arrested in January 1987 along with 6 others, and together they became known as the "L.A. 8". They were never charged with a criminal offence, but were held without bail in high security prisons for two weeks until released on their own recognizance. According to the FBI "the individuals who were arrested in California had not been found to have engaged themselves in terrorist activity."

Five years later the government is still seeking to deport the eight, and is trying to prove that Hamide and Shehadeh ran afoul of a section of the 1990 Immigration Act which prohibits non-citizens from providing "mate-

rial support" to a "terrorist organization" - in this case the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine" (PFLP), part of the PLO. Both Hamide and Shehadeh deny belonging to the PFLP.

David Cole of the Center for Constitutional Rights contended: "If you are a Palestinian and you want to support your people back home, as a practical matter, you have to send your money through the PLO and its constituent organizations. There is simply no reasonable alternative". The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and some of the other 70 civil and constitutional rights groups that have formed the Committee for Justice to support the "L.A. Eight" have argued strongly against the government's position.

The government devoted the first two weeks of its case to an attempt to establish that the PFLP was a "terrorist organization". Its main witness was Ariel Merari, an adviser to the Israeli Prime Minister and the Israeli Defence Forces, who describes himself as a "terrorist" expert. Defence lawyers have challenged Merari as an expert saying that he can neither speak nor read Arabic and lacks any broad knowledge of Palestinian affairs.

We will publish further developments of this trial in the next issue of Arm The Spirit.

Power Poles Sabotaged In Vermont

In early January, Vermont's "Rutland Herald" and the Associated Press reported that ten electrical transmission poles in five different Vermont locations have been sabotaged since April of 1992. Earlier, a letter had been received by the Central Vermont Public Service Corporation (CVPS) headquarters in Rutland, Vermont, saying that three utility poles in Rutland needed to be replaced and that there could be other consequences unless CVPS dropped its contract with Hydro-Quebec.

The wooden utility poles were all notched, cut, or drilled in a way so that they would fall over in high winds or heavy snowfall, according to Thomas Hurcomb, vice president of public affairs for the utility corporation. In all

cases, a "Q" roughly approximating the logo used by the Canadian Hydro-Quebec-owned utility was painted or drawn on the vandalized poles.

No group or individual has claimed responsibility for the acts of sabotage. CVPS has issued a reward of \$20,000 for information leading to a successful prosecution of those responsible.

The FBI is investigating the incidents. John Hersh, special agent with the Rutland office of the FBI, said the acts appeared to violate two federal laws. A federal extortion law says anyone found guilty of interfering with interstate commerce through threats of violence can

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Better Late Than Never

On November 16/92, a statue of Canada's first prime minister, John A. Macdonald, was "beheaded" and the acronym "F.L.Q." (Front de Libération du Québec - a Québécois nationalist guerrilla group that was active in the 60's and early 70's) was spraypainted at its base. A message which claimed responsibility for the action was received by a Canadian newsagency, the CBC, and it stated that the "beheading" coincided with the 107th anniversary of the hanging of Louis Riel. This action was symbolic in a number of different ways. Riel was a leader of the Metis - who were of First Nation and Québécois blood - and had led them in a number of uprisings against the Canadian government during the mid- to late-1800's. The Metis uprisings culminated in 1885 when Canadian troops put down what is known as the Metis or Northwest Rebellion, but is more accurately described by the Metis as the Northwest War of Resistance. After the defeat of Metis forces at the Battle of Batoche, Riel was captured and put on trial for treason. He was found guilty and was hung on November 16, 1885. The Metis struggle, like that of many other First Nations peoples, was a fight for self-determination and land in the face of Euro-settler expansionism. At that time the Canadian state was beginning to consolidate and one of its main protagonists was John A. Macdonald who saw Metis and other First Nation peoples as obstacles to achieving the formation of the Euro-settler Canadian nation. It's too bad that someone didn't lop off his head back then.

Rostock And Its Aftermath

Pogrom in Rostock

On October 3, Germany 'celebrated' the second-anniversary of its reunification - or rather the annexation of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) by West Germany. Also on October 3, both the far-right and the far-left in Germany took to the streets in protest, the former to call for the expulsion of all foreigners and refugees from the country, and the latter to denounce neo-nazi violence and to demand open borders for all refugees.

Germany's domestic political order has been greatly upset for the past several months, particularly after a series of racist pogroms in the former East German town of Rostock unleashed an unprecedented wave of organized, militant attacks by neo-nazi youth gangs throughout all of Germany. The attacks in Rostock began on August 22 at an anti-foreigner rally in front of a home for asylum-seekers. Despite a tip-off to police, only 20 officers were on hand when the violence began. At least 100 neo-nazi youths smashed the windows of a building, and even though 100 extra police soon showed up, they did not intervene, and the attacks on the refugee center continued until deep into the night. TV images of the pogrom showed countless neighborhood residents standing nearby, applauding and cheering.

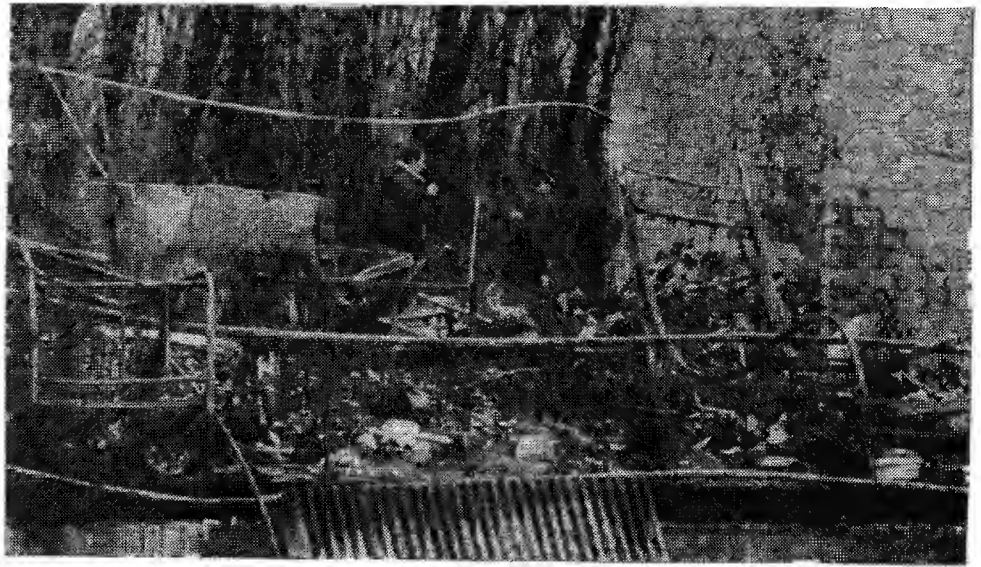
On Sunday night, a line of riot police could not prevent a second night of attacks, this time by nazi youths armed with molotov cocktails. What's more, it seemed the nazis were very well organized. Christian Worch of the far-right National List party from Hamburg was on hand to provide leadership, and neo-nazi cadres with walky-talkies (and even police radios!) helped provide organization. The obvious lack of police intervention made it clear that at least some elements within the police force either were quietly sympathetic, or may even have aided in preparations for the neo-nazi attacks. This became further evident when 100 anti-fascists were brutally dispersed when they arrived on the scene. At least 60 anti-fascists were arrested in Rostock on Sunday night, and many were placed in prison cells full of neo-nazis.

By Monday, attacks on the refugee hostel in Rostock - just like one year before in the town of Hoyerswerda - had become a nightly event. The refugees were evacuated, in a sense meaning that the neo-nazis had been successful. Moreover, inspired by the events in Rostock, neo-nazis in at least 10 other German cities rioted and attacked refugee centers on several consecutive evenings after the initial pogroms in Rostock. And for weeks after the events in Rostock, there were countless molotov attacks and stabbings by neo-nazis in cities all across Germany.

The March Goes On

So far this year, over 2000 attacks on foreigners have been carried out by fascists and neo-nazis in Germany, resulting in 15 deaths and countless injuries. Most recently, on November 20, a Berlin squatter was killed when a group of autonomists came upon a group of nazi youths who were beating a foreigner in a subway station. In the ensuing clash, three of the autonomists were stabbed, and one of them, Silvio Meier, a 27 year-old squatter, was killed. In the nights following Silvio's death, there were constant clashes between autonomists and neo-nazis. Autonomists also injured at least 37 police in a militant march through Berlin expressing their outrage at Silvio's death. Later in the week, autonomists and Turkish youths fought against police in riots in the neighborhood of Kreuzberg.

The situation in Germany became further escalated on Sunday, November 22, when neo-nazi skinheads



The remains of an asylum hostel in Eberswalde, Germany, after a fascist firebomb attack.

firebombed the house of a Turkish family, killing two Turkish women and an 11 year-old Turkish girl. Enraged at this attack, Turkish youths vowed: "Ten Germans For Every Turk!" Nine other persons were wounded in this attack.

"Attack the Nazis Wherever They Are!"

The fact that neo-nazi gangs have been on an organized offensive does not, however, mean that there has been no resistance. Church groups, citizens, and Greens have organized vigils in front of refugee centers - although it usually takes just a few skinheads with steel-toed boots and rocks and bottles to chase these folks away. In contrast to this approach, autonomist ANTIFA (anti-fascist action) groups expanded their approach of street-level confrontation with neo-nazis.

One week after the outbreak of violence in Rostock, a large anti-fascist demonstration was held in that city. Whereas only a handful of police were deployed to deal with the neo-nazis during their week of attacks, upon the arrival of the ANTIFA demonstrators, at least 2000 police were bussed into Rostock in order to "keep the peace". In other cities as well, ANTIFA marches were held, often resulting in confrontations with police and gangs of neo-nazis.

On November 8, German political and business leaders organized a massive "anti-racist" march in Berlin, mainly to improve Germany's tarnished image in the international market. When Chancellor Kohl - who has threatened to declare a state of emergency in Germany so as to more easily deport refugees - tried to march at the head of this march, he was attacked with stones and rotting fruit and security forces had to rush him away. German president Weizaecker was similarly prevented from addressing the anti-racist rally when autonomists wrecked the sound system and bombarded him with eggs. Cowering behind a phalanx of riot police on live television, Germany's political elite were effectively shown to be the hypocrites they really are.

Apart from open, mass activities, autonomists in German cities have also responded with clandestine attacks on nazi scene structures like right-wing bars, youth centers, and far-right political party offices. A group calling itself the "Red Antifascist Fraction" burned down a fascist organizing center in the city of Ahrensfelde, and in Rostock itself, just down the block from the burned-out

refugee center, the "Antonio Amadeo Commando" (named for an Angolan beaten to death by nazis in 1990 in Eberswalde) trashed the far-right youth center "MAX". Such attacks on nazi political/cultural structures have been commonplace in Germany for several years, but the recent pogroms in Rostock have given the actions a renewed sense of urgency, particularly since the neo-nazi movement seems to be gaining in numbers and organization. Autonomists have also carried out attacks on governmental structures responsible for deportations and racist asylum policies. Most recently, on November 21, a clandestine cell fire-bombed the judicial faculty division of the Volks-Uni university in Hamburg.

The Potential Of The Far-Right

The German government has only minimally reacted to the recent upsurge in fascist violence. In the law courts, young nazis are usually given lenient sentences, since the judges usually rule that the attacks were not political, but were rather the result of the youths' "poor, impoverished upbringing" or "too much alcohol"; the German courts have refused to criminalize the far-right. Many left-wing ANTIFA groups, however, have been criminalized for some time. The entire Autonome ANTIFA scene in the city of Göttingen has been criminalized under German law paragraph 129a. In fact, there have been 300 cases brought against the radical-left under paragraph 129a, while only 6 proceedings have been brought against fascists.

The far-right youth scene has also been enlivened by an increasing number of neo-nazi rock bands. Bands such as Störkraft rile up their fans at concerts with "Sieg Heill" salutes and lyrics about using flame-throwers to extinguish Jews, disabled persons, and "gypsies". Under German law, such lyrics are technically illegal, but only a few fascist bands have had their songs banned. And obviously, being banned only makes them more popular within neo-nazi youth scenes.

This lack of repression against the far-right has done much to allow the movement's continued rise. The nazi's have seen immediate results from their attacks: fire-bombing refugee homes has led to refugees being moved out of certain cities; while nazis shout "Foreigners Out!", the German government makes payments to Romania as it deports the Roma people back to a land where they are routinely attacked, and while the German parlia-

ment debates the abolition of Article 16 of the German constitution which guarantees all asylum-seekers the right to enter Germany. Ideologically, the extreme right and the German state are after the same ends: the German government wants to limit and control the influx of outsiders into Germany, thus it can effectively utilize neo-nazis as shock troops for this end. The fact that many German police officers vote for far-right political parties helps explain their reluctance to crack down on protests rallies by far-right groups with whom they may tacitly or openly feel sympathy. Thus, it is the ANTIFA movement which has been criminalized, while the German government only pays lip service to calls for a crack-down on far-right extremism.

There is some hope in the fact that most rank-and-file nazis are not at all politically developed (although it would be foolish to ignore the well-developed international ties which the far-right movement's leadership has established). To a large degree, young skinheads are motivated by the fact that many of them live in the former GDR where the economic future is bleak. Well-organized nazi organizations then channel their frustration and energy and translate it into violence against foreigners. But with resistance and repression, the far-right could be defeated. The 19 year-old youth who confessed to taking part in the fatal fire-bombing in Mölln tried to commit suicide in prison. And if nazi youths suddenly found themselves under continuous attack from armed Turkish gangs, for example, then they would perhaps be less confident in roaming the streets.

"Open Borders For All!"

Again, what was most frightening about the series of racist attacks in Rostock and throughout Germany in August and September was the degree of public support which the attacks commanded, and the political results which the attacks had. The fact that violence by neo-nazis was 'successful' in having refugees removed from neighborhoods where they were 'not wanted' is alarming. And rather than lashing out at the far-right and calling for solidarity with the oppressed peoples' of the world, Germany's political leaders from all of Germany's major political parties instead admitted that there was indeed a refugee "problem" and that Germany's constitutional guarantee to a refugee's right to asylum needed to be restricted.

As ever, the recent events in Germany have showed the urgency for militant anti-racist/anti-fascist organizing. And this organization needs to be two-fold: first, there needs to be theoretical/ideological organizing, so as to be able to analyze, for example, the reasons why global capitalism leads to large numbers of refugees heading from the impoverished lands of the South to the wealthy nations of the North, and why we should support the call for "Open Borders For All!"; and second, the left needs to provide both concrete solidarity with refugees by supporting their own organizational efforts, as well as by organizing our own militant, street-level resistance so as to attack neo-nazis and their organizational structures wherever they arise. Nazis should not be allowed to walk the streets unmolested. They are like a cancer: if left unopposed, they will continue to carry out their attacks. Anti-racists and anti-fascists need to be just as effective at the street-level in opposing them.

No Easy Solutions

Being effective at street level means more than only meeting violence with violence. Militancy alone will not defeat fascism. An anti-fascist movement must take into account the broader perspective; it must look at the 'big picture'. For example, the fact that fascists have been able to mobilize support, particularly in East Germany, shows that the recent upsurge in this activity has deeper roots. While the supposedly "real existing" socialism in the former GDR was anti-fascist, it was so in name only.

Racism, anti-semitism, and sexism continued to exist; simmering below the surface of East German society. The many migrant workers brought into the GDR from other "socialist" countries such as Vietnam, and Angola were detained in special neighbourhoods - such as Rostock's Lichtenhagen - and kept separate from East German society.

With reunification and the subsequent restructuring, East German living conditions have deteriorated due to factory closures, housing shortages and a decline in social services. The combination of simmering racism and economic decline has made the former GDR a fertile breeding ground for fascist organizing.

An anti-fascist strategy must take these and other issues into account - it must avoid falling into the trap of 'single-issue' politics. So, it has to be placed within a larger context of the struggle against capitalism, racism, sexism, etc. There are no easy solutions to the questions that these issues raise. The realization that many East Germans are indeed racist is not something that can be met only with moral condemnation or violence - there must be dialogue and interaction. Beating them up isn't going to necessarily turn them into anti-fascists. The left must offer practical alternatives; and its politics must be rele-



vant and accessible in relation to the everyday struggles of not only the German working class but refugees and immigrants who face fascist violence. Clearly, meeting organized fascist violence requires a militant response but this can be only one aspect of an anti-fascist strategy. This struggle must be fought on many different levels whether on the streets, in the factories or simply trying to win over people's "hearts and minds".

Three Greek Militants Arrested

On Wednesday December 2, two men and one woman were arrested in Athens: Giorgos Balafas, Wasiliki Michu, and Andreas Kiriakopoulos. Giorgos Balafas is accused of:

- founding a terrorist organization and membership in a terrorist organization of more than two persons with the aim of murdering persons with weapons;
- sale and possession of drugs;
- weapons construction, possession, and sale to various organizations;
- supporting a terrorist organization;
- possession of an illegal radio transmitter;
- possession of falsified documents;
- auto theft.

Wasiliki Michu and Andreas Kiriakopoulos are charged with supporting a terrorist organization and the possession of falsified documents. According to the cops, Giorgos Balafas is alleged to have taken part in the following actions:

- the shooting of state prosecutor Theofanopulu in April '85; this action was claimed by the group "Anti-State Action" [now called "1st of May Commando"];
- a shoot-out in Gizi, during which three cops were shot, as was one of Balafas' alleged helpers, Christos Tsatsavis; May '85;
- a shoot-out in Kalogrezas, during which the alleged leader of "Anti-State Action", Michalis Prekas, was killed; October '87;
- a bomb-attack in Exarchia, for which Kiriakos Mavrokopos has been sentenced; November '90;
- a bomb-attack in Sepolia; November '86;
- a bank robbery in Galatsi; May '86;
- attacks on groups of police carried out by the groups "November 17" and "Revolutionary Resistance";
- the shooting of a CIA agent in December '75.

Balafas has been sought by the cops for several years now, and the Greek press has been portraying

him as a "leading terrorist". The press has repeatedly spread lies about him. The conservative New Democracy government claimed in 1989 that Balafas had ties with both November 17 and the social democratic party PASOK. Many of the files regarding this case have been burned by the police, leading to speculation that either they are withholding information or preparing for more arrests.

The three arrested militants were observed for months and were arrested in an intensive police raid during a party with friends. Allegedly, police found a cache of weapons, hand grenades, false documents, and drugs, as well as a car with a fake licence plate. Shortly after the arrests, Greek TV uncovered a scandal when the head of the police and a high-ranking general gave conflicting accounts of what had been seized, etc. In the end, the Greek interior minister resigned and publicly apologized for some of the false information which was stated regarding the number of weapons seized, etc. In the press as well, the cops were made to look foolish on account of their blood-thirsty raid on Balafas' house.

Balafas and the other two militants arrested did not make any statements whatsoever to the police.

Nonetheless, a short press-release was issued by Balafas:

"The program of lies from the police over the last few years has now reached its high-point. The press has also played its role in this, by portraying me as 'the most dangerous and unpredictable terrorist in Greece'. And the cops, who accuse me of having weapons and explosives, have now added drugs to the list. I have not killed or wounded anyone. I demand that these lies be publicly set right. I have not made a statement to police, because I do not want to become a victim of their so-called 'anti-terror campaign'. Cops lie today, just as they always have, just because my ideas and my way of life are radically opposed to the existing system and its values - and many people think

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"500 Years of Rape and Hate - We Refuse To Celebrate"

International Tribunal Of Indigenous Peoples And Oppressed Nations In The USA

From October 2-4 there was an "International Tribunal of North American Native and Oppressed Peoples" in San Francisco. Organized by AIM (American Indian Movement) and supported by representatives of the Puerto Rican, New Afrikan, and Mexican peoples movements, as well as progressive white groups, the conference dealt with the 500th anniversary of the beginning of European colonialism on the American continent.

Francis Boyle, professor of international law and key-note speaker, who also addressed the political prisoners' tribunal in New York in 1990, drew sharp parallels between the Nazi system and the U.S. government. Other speakers included David Cunningham, who also worked on the New York tribunal, as well as other lawyers and experts.

Twenty witnesses, including a representative of the native population of Hawaii as well as a long-time political prisoner of the Puerto Rican independence movement, Rafael Cancel Miranda, imprisoned along with other comrades for a 1954 shooting incident inside the U.S. Congress, spoke against the U.S. government's genocide, violation of human rights, and detention of prisoners of war. Their statement had been delivered to the U.S. attorney general ten days previously.

After several hours of testimony and jury deliberation, the five female "judges" and two male "judges"

from Spain, native Canada, West Germany, the Philippines, and the U.S. (native American, Asian-American, African-American/New Afrikan) found the U.S. government guilty on all counts.

Part of the tribunal also consisted of conferences, a cultural evening, and a women's podium, as well as work groups on racism, homophobia, political prisoners/prisoners of war, as well as information tables from various groups. The welcoming address from the prisoners of the RAF and the German resistance was well received.

Approximately 1200 people took part in the Tribunal and the other activities around the campaign of "500 Years of Resistance", which received a fair amount of press on the West coast. On October 11, there was a demo of about 7000 people to oppose the Columbus Day celebrations in San Francisco. A "peace navy" in the harbor successfully prevented the landing of replicas of Columbus' ships. The day before, AIM had successfully prevented a similar pro-Columbus celebration from taking place in Denver, Colorado.

During the San Francisco anti-Columbus demo, fighting broke out with police and approximately 40 people were arrested. Some comrades were stuck with felony charges for fire-bombing a police car.

(Adapted from Angehörigen Info #105 & Ides #612/613)

Message From German Political Prisoners To The Tribunal

To the participants of the International Tribunal "500 Years of resistance against genocide, colonialism and political interment".

Here we send to you our warmest solidarity greetings from the political prisoners in Germany. This tribunal will be an outstanding event in the history of 500 years of resistance against genocide and colonialism. It is integrated in a multitude of activities during this year, all over the world as an expression of the growing consciousness, that this continual history of extermination of human life can only be changed when we all join together internationally.

Today, with this consciousness and our experience from resistance, our pain and the sorrow of people, but mainly our hopes we can turn them into a common weapon: against the power of the elite, against the deeply inhuman system.

Also in Europe many people are involved in the "500 years campaign". We hope that this will be the beginning of an intensive political work together which will help us to receive answers for the questions everywhere. We'll only find real answers when we carry out our struggles for essential changes in an international context. Even if many problems seem to be, at first sight, limited regionally and nationally, the people of the Three Continents and those of the metropolises are confronted with the same basic problems. The globalized circumstances with which we are confronted today, require common answers in a situation in which the right to live is fundamentally called into question for the majority of the people in the world. It is a vicious circle of poverty and destruction of the natural living conditions and out of the

current world market-structure. Our whole future and life depends on that we break through this circle by working together internationally; understanding and discussion is necessary between us, how to achieve a human perspective against the destructive world order. For the experiences of the struggles have the same importance as the ideas to resolve these problems, which we want to develop now. Our hope for the future is that there will be a development of intensive inter-relationship on the basis of mutual respect and solidarity. When we have had a visit in prison from Puerto Ricans, from members of the Black community in the USA or members of the American Indian Movement and from Latin America, we could see numerous possibilities and richness materializing from this mutual respect and solidarity.

The liberation of the political prisoners and of the prisoners of war all over the world is one of the concrete political developments, on which this process will arise. In Western Europe there are more than 2,000 political prisoners. They are from struggles for self-determination and social revolution. Also in Europe the ruling classes are violating basic principles of international law and human rights. The legitimate struggles are declared as "terrorism". We, the political prisoners in Germany are part of the revolutionary struggles during the last 25 years; one of us Irmgard Möller is in solitary confinement since 1972, sentenced because of armed attacks against the U.S. war in Vietnam. The internationalism, the solidarity and the common fight with the people in the south and the oppressed people of all continents is an elementary thing since our beginning. It is the basis of our politics and practice, that makes the possibilities for

Anti-Columbus Actions In Latin America

Latin America was the site of massive native protests on October 12 in opposition to the official celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the re-discovery of the continent by Columbus. There was a mixture of mass protests and militant actions.

Columbia: More than 10,000 natives wanted to demonstrate in Popayan in southern Columbia, but we confronted by the armed forces. More than 20 persons were wounded. Street barricades were set up in many other regions throughout Columbia. Bombs caused material damage in Bogota and Barranquilla.

Peru: In Cuzco (the former Inca capital) more than 40,000 native peasants gathered to remember the "victims of the invasion" and the "heroes of the resistance in the Andes". In Lima, guerrillas blew up a bank office in a wealthy neighborhood.

Ecuador: In Sierra, streets were blockaded with stones and construction materials. Native also occupied several establishments. There was a protest march to Quito under the motto "500 Years of Resistance" involving 10,000 people.

Bolivia: Several natives, mostly Ketschuas and Aymaras, gathered in La Paz. There, an "association of native peoples" was to be established.

Chile: There were several press conferences, especially in Temuco, where Mapuches had been protesting for months to get back their land which had been stolen by white. In Santiago, a bomb damaged the Spanish embassy.

Mexico: The Maya Council in Yucatan called for protests in every small village. There was also a ceremony by several thousand natives to celebrate "the fact that we have retained our fighting spirit".

change ascertainable and real. And today we will resist as well any attempt to liquidate these politics. We are imprisoned because we are fighting to build up a revolutionary front in Western Europe, which is part of the international movement for radical change of the ruling system based on exploitation. For 22 years the German State has tried to destroy us by all means, because we are holding onto our struggle; the state is doing this with special counterinsurgency programs, criminalization, solitary confinement, etc. Our aims and conditions of detention unite us with the political prisoners all over the world. At this stage we extend solidarity greetings to Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu-Jamal and Alejandrina Torres...!

In your appeal you say that this International Tribunal will help to organize the next 500 years in a completely different way: that the world will live on through the solidarity of the people, in which their own cultural identity is free and all people will be able to share the rich resources of the earth by saving the environment. We, the political prisoners are part of this struggle and are involved in these discussions.

We are very conscious of the special responsibility in this development that the people have in the metropolises, and especially today while Germany is on its way to becoming a world power. During the last 10 years, the propagated victory of the "free market economy" has drastically intensified the misery of the majority of the people in the world and the economic, military and cultural attacks against them.

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Interview With Dr. Luis Nieves Falcón

Co-ordinator Of Ofensiva '92

Could you tell us a bit about what Ofensiva '92 is, and what were the reasons behind organizing the campaign?

Ofensiva '92 is what one could call a civic organization or movement which includes persons from all the social classes, political ideologies, sexes and ages. It is a national effort in Puerto Rico to bring to the attention of the Puerto Rican people on the island, and to the outside world the fact that we have political prisoners, that they have been illegally sentenced and imprisoned by the U.S. government, and in addition to the illegality of these sentences and imprisonment, their human rights are continuously violated.

We say their human rights are being continuously violated taking into consideration the international treaty that has been signed by various countries including the U.S. on the treatment of prisoners. All the rules that are applicable in that treaty, signed by the U.S. and other signatory nations, are violated constantly in the treatment of the Puerto Rican political prisoners. We feel that this constant violation and oppression and harassment of Puerto Rican political prisoners is one way to break their spirit and at the same time create fear and try to prevent the growing feeling for independence and the growing feeling for recognizing the brutality of the treatment by the U.S.

How many political prisoners and Prisoners of War are currently being held by the U.S.?

At the moment we have 19 political prisoners and Prisoners of War. Six months ago there were 16, and last month there were 18, so we know that the number will continue growing as the repression geared towards harassing supporters of freedom for Puerto Rico increases. At the moment we have 19.

What kinds of organizing are being looked at both in Puerto Rico and amongst the Puerto Rican community in the U.S.?

Our organizing efforts are, I think, three-fold. Our main target actually is the Puerto Rican community. So we are organizing support committees in every municipality of the island. At the moment we have support committees in 30 out of the 70 municipalities on the



island. And each one of them has a varied calendar of programs and activities geared fundamentally to letting the people know who the political prisoners are, so that they may become acquainted with them, to let them know what the reasons are that they have been incarcerated, and third, to raise consciousness so that the people start calling for their immediate liberation.

I feel, by the kinds of activities that are going on every month on the island, that we are increasingly meeting these objectives. On the other hand, we are inviting sister organizations in the U.S. and organizations in the Puerto Rican communities in the U.S. to follow the same example. At the moment we already have 12 support committees in cities in the Eastern part of the U.S. that are not Puerto Rican, but which are organizations that are in solidarity with our cause, that are working on the issue also.

Our third level is the international level, where I

think we have been quite successful. For example, for the first time we have been able to get the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva to take notice that there are political prisoners in the U.S. and that their rights have been violated. And the commission, as normal procedure, has informed the U.S. of these complaints and they have requested the U.S. to answer the charges that we have presented to the Commission. This is more important precisely at this moment since we know the strong pressures and the strong power that the U.S. exerts throughout all the organizing of the U.N.

In addition to that we are in the process of challenging the violation of human rights in the Organization of American States (O.A.S.). The O.A.S. has traditionally been controlled by the U.S., to such an extent that their main offices are in Washington. It has a Commission of Human Rights and we have already placed a petition to the Commission on Human Rights of the O.A.S. to examine the violations by the U.S. We are also frequent speakers at all of the international forums of the non-aligned countries and other international forums interested in human rights.

In the U.S. itself, we have been lobbying some of the Congress people, trying to interest them in the violations that daily occur against the Puerto Rican political prisoners and two weeks ago four congress persons sent a letter to the Bureau of Prisons inquiring about the violations we have reported to them. So in a sense I think that we are progressing in the international arena.

You have given the campaign the title "Ofensiva '92" and of course 1992 is becoming a very significant year for many communities. Of course it is being celebrated in some segments of society as the 500 anniversary of the so-called discovery of the Americas by Columbus. For many people it is a different legacy and we are seeing the native communities in particular organizing and celebrating 500 years of resistance. Similarly, the African-American communities are organizing celebrations of their own resistance to slavery, which was an inevitable result of Columbus' invasion of the continent. What is the relevance of 1992 to the Puerto Rican people?

1992 is very relevant to the Puerto Rican people in particular to the political prisoners and Prisoners of War, because in a sense these comrades represent the resistance against oppression. In a sense they are the recipients of the legacy of resistance to colonialism in the Spanish times by the Native Americans and the slaves and the white presence. And our presence in a way are the ones who have continued that tradition of resistance. In that sense 1992 symbolizes not only the conquest and the colonial domination of the Americas by the European powers, but it also is a very definite representation of the long tradition of resistance of Native Americans and Blacks in the Americas.

Also by attaching the number '92' we want to signify that this year we will increase all our efforts for the freedom of our patriots and that we expect that the efforts will crystallize in some concrete efforts towards their liberation.

When you talk about the prisoners today being the legacy of the continued resistance of the Puerto Rican people to that kind of genocide and colonialism, which is ongoing in the U.S. at this point but from other

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Puerto Rican News Shorts

On November 3, the New Progressive Party which supports U.S. statehood for Puerto Rico won the governorship and the majority of municipalities in the Puerto Rican general elections. According to the Movimiento Amplio de Pueblo (Broad People's Movement - BPM), a recount shows that environmentalist candidate Nef-tali Garcia won 70,189 votes in the election (3.8 % of the total), some 12,000 more than in the first tabulation. The Puerto Rican Independence Party came in behind with 3.3 %. According to the BPM this error shows the State Election Commissions bias in favor of the registered parties... On November 20, 1992, the New York City Council, by a vote of 36 to 9 passed a resolution asking the United Nations Decolonization Committee to urge the United States Government to declare a general amnesty for all Puerto Rican political prisoners and

prisoners. The political prisoners have also finally gotten the support of Amnesty International, after 12 long years of struggle... According to a report in a Navy magazine, for the first time in 10 years, Navy practice maneuvers on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques included the dropping of napalm bombs. A Navy spokesperson stated that because of the situation created among high-level officials as result of the report, the practice would probably stop. He also stated that the bombings were being done under controlled conditions and the nearest home was 10 miles away... On November 30, Carlo Pineiro, a leader of the Puerto Rican independence movement died at age 37. He had worked tirelessly for the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners being held in the U.S., and his efforts led to the successful New York City resolution.

Imperialist Peace Is War!

Excerpt From The Wotta Sitta Document "Imperialist Peace Is War"

In previous issues of Arm The Spirit we have printed statements and letters from the Italian communist prisoners collective Wotta Sitta. In A.T.S. #12 we published a letter from some Wotta Sitta comrades who were on trial in Rome. At the end of this trial they wrote a long paper called "Imperialist Peace Is War!" in which they analyzed the present world-wide political reality. In this excerpt they discuss, among other things, the 500 Years of Resistance campaigns.

Crisis And War

"Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: It has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting into two great camps, into two great classes directly facing each other - bourgeoisie and proletariat." (Marx, Engels)

1. Last year saw an intensification of the imperialist bourgeoisie's class rule around the world, under the pressure of monopoly capital, which is trying to overcome the unresolved crisis of the 70's by speeding up the process of the concentration, centralization, and internalization of capital.

This process is leading (by itself) to a profound alteration in the shape of class rule. On the one hand, it is leading to a number of growing and explosive contradictions, which are multi-productive and multinational, among states and economic areas, thus making clear the inherent limits of the era of globalization and economic interdependence. On the other hand, this same process results in a direct attack against the living conditions of billions of proletarians and people around the world, through the ruthless policies that the G7, World Bank, NATO and the ONU, as supranational bodies of capitalism, are controlling and defining.

The Gulf War has been the clearest and most visible demonstration of this intensified class rule, and of imperialism's determination to accept no questions about its interests and international settlements of power. The 90's are beginning with the most logical and realistic scenario for imperialism in this epoch: war and the reports of war that characterize the today's struggle, and the consequent tragic results of this barbaric domination over human life.

The might and power of the West hasn't translated into a 'new world order', rather it has translated into a period of great confusion and upset, of rising conflict and instability. The ending of the world order established at Yalta is proving to be more complicated and traumatic than expected. The costs of the Yalta settlement were the dead of WW II; and what the U.S.-led imperialist powers are trying to impose will not cost any less. Let us leave to the reformists and revisionists their dangerous illusions and lies; we prefer to remember the lessons of history: history has shown that when a balance of power collapses, a new war is inevitable and necessary in order to build up another balance of power. From Versailles to Yalta, to...

Imperialism is war. War has always been the way by which the bourgeoisie tries to resolve its crisis, by unloading the cost of its propagation and reproduction on the proletarian class in a destructive manner.

Also, today the war cannot be considered to have been finished with the victory of the western alliance in the Gulf War, because we have already seen, in this last decade of the century, a lot of wars breaking out in the various geo-political areas of the world. War is coming back again, even in Europe, with broad and rising armed conflicts and civil wars occurring, particularly in the former Yugoslavia and the former USSR.

This scenario, which, tragically, we are seeing daily, assumes specific characteristics and develops precisely in this area that is the true nerve center of the entire planet, because it is crossed by all of the contradictions of this epoch. The principal and predominant one is between proletariat and bourgeoisie; the explosion between the North and South of the world that generates the inter-imperialist economic and political conflict that already exists and which tends to develop among the world powers in their dividing up and domination of the world.

The European imperialist bourgeoisie is speeding up the necessary steps that cannot be given up (even though these steps are contradictory) to put forward the economic, political and military integration process of the European states in order to be a bloc, i.e. a political subject being able to establish homogenous policies that are binding internally and significantly to advance on the rest of the world.

"1992" is not to be merely a formal celebration of the birth of the "European Union", but the moment for the practical realization of its basic passage as a whole and a turning point in its fulfillment. Therefore the "European Union" is an advancement of class rule in the entire continental area and of its imperialist projection in the other areas of the world, beginning with the Mediterranean-Middle East, as shown already with its active involvement in the Gulf war.

Europe wants to take part and does take part as a protagonist in the "new world order". In Italy it is enough to remember the actions against the Iraqi people by the "heroes" Bellini and Cacciolone and their other stooges a year ago; the air-lifts to get rid of the Albanian refugees and control them in their own country, from now on little more than a new Italian protectorate; and the increasing political and military missions in Yugoslavia, a true backyard of De Michelis and his stooges, or in far off El Salvador.

Obviously, the aims of "Great Germany", England and France and the resurrected Spain are not any less, and they can rely on a considerable legacy of world colonization. "1992" sees the European states aiming at the conquest and exploitation of resources and peoples, just like 500 years ago.

The proletarian in Europe and around the world have felt for a longtime the new quality of the struggle and they have never stopped their resistance against the capitalist strategies that are more and more destructive and directed only towards profit. The proletarian struggles, the liberation and freedom processes, have to deal with a huge advancement in the repressive counter-revolution that heavily marked many revolutionary experiences and which are trying to prevent the coming together of new experiences. Nevertheless, one can already see many features of a passage to a new revolutionary age marked by a deeper struggle, wherein the proletarian struggle throughout the world is more and more connected and linked against the common enemy. The mass mobilizations and the initiatives of the revolution-



Some comrades from Wotta Sitta: Maria Pia Vianale (standing), Rosa Mura (below Vianale), Anna Cotone (beside Mura), Susanna Berardi (above Cotone) and Caterina Spano

ary forces within the areas of the imperialist 'centres', as well as those of the Third World, during the Gulf War, have undoubtedly contributed to strengthening the ground of anti-imperialism and proletarian internationalism. The varied examples of proletarian resistance and the many revolutionary initiatives that are starting to strike and sabotage all of the processes characterizing "1992" are moving in this same direction. Such processes are seen by the proletariat as a capitalist turning point under the guise of "deregulation" and reaction.

This is a tendency that sees the intensification of exploitation, the widening of unemployment and marginalization, the worsening of living standards, along with a more and more alienated life, and more and more the imposition of repressive, fascist, and racist policies against those people that are pressing against the borders of "Fortress Europe".

500 years ago the "conquest of the Americas" was the beginning of a new age and of a European policy of oppression against the countries and peoples possessing resources and wealth that enabled the establishment of world colonization and domination, and rule for rising capitalism and its emerging class.

But that was not all; the increasing impoverishment of these peoples - the basis for the progress of the "developed and civilized Europe" - was often accompanied by extermination.

As Marx wrote in "Capital": "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation"

Historical research measures the quality of these "idyllic processes": in 1500 the population of the world was 400 million, 80 million of which were in America. After 50 years, there remained only 10 million of these 80

million. In Mexico, at the time of the conquest there were about 25 million, in 1600 there were only 1 million.

This is the historical meaning of the proceedings that capitalism wants to celebrate with its endless productions around the "Fifth Centennial of the Discovery of the Americas". If European countries are once again taking the lead in these initiatives, it isn't simply out of a spirit of celebration, but rather it is a highlighting of the present rights of capitalist accumulation which are most advantageous to the world's big monopolies. It is a neo-colonialism in which the EEC, as the main character and protagonist, attempts to win the growing resources and spaces for exploitation in the Three Continents, in competition with U.S. and Japanese capital. Penetration by European capital is the form that the "conquest" takes today: a new dividing up of the world.

The threads of the proletarian struggles that are linking up in the various geographical areas of the world against U.S., European and Japanese imperialism are making concrete a new proletarian internationalism. This new proletarian internationalism is radically questioning and fighting against the basic premises of the rise and development of the capitalistic social formations.

The political and economic strategies that are guiding capitalist reorganization have for many years produced rising social and class contradictions that define the features and extent of the class war at this stage. There is a huge scale process of proletarianization, due to the changes in the international division of labour that's characterizing the present half of this century. The advance of capitalism had forced most of the world's population in a proletarian condition, and this increasingly prevents almost any possibility of a non-capitalist existence, both in the center and periphery's areas, in the North as well as in the South and East of the world. More and more, every human being is directly confronted with the 'bare profit law'; the inhuman effect of an oppressive and destructive process on humanity, nature and the environment. It is a process of unprecedented dimension because this time capitalism intervenes directly against them for its exploitive, reproductive, and expansionist needs.

Having reached complete maturity at this stage of metropolitan capitalism's advanced development, this combination of factors results more and more in an increase and expansion of social unrest and conflict, throwing a growing number of men and women into a dimension of class struggle. At the same time, it establishes a terrain of objective connections between the struggles of the proletariat and the people of the world against the economic, political and military system that has historically imposed itself, and which revolves around the U.S. at the present, and against its new deployment over the last few years.

In Europe, to struggle against all of the policies that are pushing forward the dynamics of European integration and that extend imperialism's advancement in the world, means to have an awareness that in Europe, now more than before, many of the confrontation lines between imperialism and revolution, as well as between neo-colonialism and liberation struggles, are converging. It also means to concretely stand by the campesinos, natives and revolutionary forces against the "500 Year" celebration, so that they can raise their voices "against the ignominy of the colonial, neo-colonial and imperialist oppression, with the aim to consolidate our identity and to fortify our liberation struggle throughout all the continent". (Quito Statement - Campesinos-Indigenous Organization)

Communist Prisoners Collective Wotta Sitta

For more information or copies of other writings by Wotta Sitta please write to our Canadian address (see page 2).



...and more comrades (Left to right): Luciano Farina, Giovanni Senzani, Giovanni Gentile Schiavone, Vittorio Bolognesi and Lorenzo Calzone

Free Sundiata Acoli!

After 20 long, hard years, Sundiata Acoli, ex-Black Panther and member of the Black Liberation Army, is coming up for parole in early 1993. Because of his outstanding achievements, New Jersey Department of Corrections recently restored all of the "good time" they had taken from him during the early 70's; which made him immediately eligible for parole. Yet the parole board plans to give him a 10 year "hit", meaning, "Do 10 more years!" We are asking all people concerned about justice to write the parole board today, demanding that Sundiata be released when he comes up for parole. Send personal and form letters and signature petitions to:

The New Jersey State Parole Board
CN-562
Trenton, NJ
08625 USA
(609) 292 4257

Also send a copy of your letter or petition to:

Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign
P.O. Box 5538, Manhattanville Station
Harlem, NY
10027 USA
(203) 966 9048

This will help his attorney, Jill Soffiyah Elijah, (718) 575 4460 (Work); (718) 575 4478 (FAX); (718) 282 3576 (Home), verify to the parole board that the letters and petitions were sent.

A Bit Of History About Sundiata

In 1973, Sundiata and Assata Shakur were captured after a shoot-out on the New Jersey Turnpike during which their companion Zayd Shakur and a state trooper, Werner Foerster, were killed.

Following a highly publicized trial, Sundiata was convicted and sentenced to life at Trenton State Prison.

There he was confined for 5 years in a MCU isolation cell which was smaller than the SPCA's space requirement for a 90 lb. German Shepherd dog. He was then secretly transferred over 1,000 miles to the infamous Federal Penitentiary at Marion, Illinois, although he had no federal charges or convictions. An entrance physical exam showed that Sundiata had been heavily exposed to tuberculosis while he was at Trenton Prison. Even so, for the next 8 years at Marion, he was confined 23 hours per day in an isolation cell containing only a stone bed, toilet bowl and sink. Finally in 1987, Sundiata was transferred to general population at Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary, Kansas.

Sundiata has had only one minor disciplinary infraction in the last 10 years. At Leavenworth he has maintained a straight "A" average in all his college courses while earning diplomas in both Desktop Computers and Paralegal Real Estate Law. He has also received "above average" job-performance ratings and he has worked 7 days per week for the last 5 years as a cellblock janitor.

Because of his outstanding record, the New Jersey Department of Corrections recently restored the 2.5 years of "good time" he had lost while confined in Trenton's MCU Unit; which made him immediately eligible for parole. Yet the New Jersey Parole Board plans to "hit" him with 10 more years when he comes up for parole. For Sundiata, already 56 years old and infected with tuberculosis, that will amount to a death sentence. Write the parole board today, and demand that Sundiata be released at his parole hearing.

Write to Sundiata!

Sundiata Acoli #39794-066
P.O. Box 1000
Leavenworth, KS
66048 USA

(Adapted from a leaflet by the Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign)

Interview With Abdul Majid

Black Liberation Army Political Prisoner

The following is an edited transcript of an interview that took place October 7/92 on CKLN, a progressive radio station in Toronto, Canada.

Could you give us an update on, and maybe a bit of a background to, the case of the Queens 2?

Right. The case stems from a shooting incident in the spring of 1981, in the county of Queens, which is in New York City. Two police officers, during the course of their tour, pulled over a van during the early morning, and two men allegedly got out of the van and opened fire on the police. As a result one police officer was killed and one was wounded.

Myself and my co-defendant, Bashir Hameed, were subsequently marked as the individuals who allegedly were involved in the shooting. And as a result of that, warrants were taken out for our arrest. I was arrested in January of 1982 and Bashir was arrested in August of 1981.

We went to trial on the charge of murder and attempted murder of police officers back in 1982 which resulted in a hung jury on the murder charge and we were convicted of one of the lesser charges of attempted murder of one of the officers.

We were tried again in 1983 and that ended with a 8 to 4, 9 to 3 verdict of jurors leaning towards acquittal. After this second trial we were tried again in 1986, which resulted in our conviction on the murder charge. So we were tried three times on the same indictment, and presently, in 1992, we are back in Queens on an appeal, not an appeal actually, but an evidentiary hearing on an appeal resulting from the murder conviction. The hearing begins on the 13th.

The purpose of the hearing is to determine whether or not during the course of the third trial the prosecutor used his preemptory challenges, which each side had, to exclude a certain number of jurors - whether or not the prosecutor used his preemptory challenge to prevent Blacks from being on the jury.

So we can see that the prosecutor was running a very political prosecution against you and Bashir. They don't try too many people three times in order to get a conviction - especially after two hung juries. What sort of tactics did you see the prosecution using, besides as you mentioned the jury selection and the barring of Black jurors. Did they do anything else in terms of manipulating evidence against you?

The case was very highly publicized, and it was political. One of the reason for that was that both Bashir and I were former members of the Black Panther Party, as well as being still very politically active in the New York/New Jersey area, in the Afrikan-American community, and working with the progressive white community as well as with the Latino community. And so we were pretty well known from our Black Panther Party days, and through our still active involvement. So, we became the likely suspects.

In the third trial not only did the prosecutor do everything possible to eliminate Blacks from the jury, as well as other Third World and non-white people, but he also manipulated evidence. Evidence was withheld from the defence. One example of withheld evidence was the reports that were made by the investigating officers. At the first trial we were given about 350 or 370 of these, and by the third trial we had been given about a total of 400.



Abdul Majid

Bashir Hameed



After the third trial I instituted a Freedom of Information suit to find out what stuff the police and prosecution had in their possession pertaining to the case. I just recently learned that they had some 3000 documents in their possession, and we were given only approximately 400 of these documents. So now we are in the process of trying to obtain these documents to see what other materials there are that may have been helpful to exonerate us, or to explore other areas that the prosecution could have but refused to for whatever reason. So we are waiting for these documents now.

Also, there was a manipulation of witnesses who were arrested across the south-eastern part of the U.S. and they were brought to New York to give testimony about matters which they had no knowledge of. There was also manipulation of the fingerprints that were supposedly lifted off the van that was involved in the shooting. Police officers themselves got on the stand and deliberately perjured themselves and gave false testimony, and this was common practice. So these are the sorts of things that went on during the third trial.

Did the witnesses and people supporting you and Bashir face a lot of harrasment by the police and the state? I know that in other political trials, particularly of people whose testimony conflicts with the story that the state tries to put together, they are often faced with really high levels of intimidation and violence directed against them in order to silence them or get them to change their story. Were there any instances of this in your case?

Well, yes, in fact this is what was done; this is what I was referring to when I said that there were people dragged in from across the south-eastern part of United States. They went as far as South Carolina, and people were arrested and held under order of protective custody. Friends of mine and Bashir's were arbitrarily arrested. These were people who had given statements to the police during the course of their investigation, and over a period of time they were coerced into changing their prior statements, in order to conform with what the police wanted them to testify to, and this was in contrast to their original statements that the police had gotten during the course of their investigation. It was at least six or seven people who were brought into court in this fashion - under

protest you know - but nonetheless they were coerced into testifying. In fact, one of the witnesses came back and he recanted his original statement that he had made on the stand during the third trial, and he told the court and the jury about what had been done to him. And the jury nonetheless convicted us. This is just a small glimpse of what was being done to other witnesses who were brought in and intimidated.

Also, I might add, that at least three witnesses received reward money. There were some \$30,000 in reward money, and one witness, who was a taxi-driver who had not witnessed the shooting, but who had picked up two men in the vicinity of the shooting, in 1982 he appeared at a preliminary trial hearing on the identification issue to see if he could identify Bashir or myself, and he unequivocally said that he did not see the two men that he picked up in his taxi in court at the present time. In 1986, during the third trial this man was called to testify - he did not testify at the first or second trial - and he positively identified Bashir and myself as the two men that he had picked up on the day in question. It was learned later that he was also a recipient of some of the \$30,000 reward money that was put up by the police department and the Policeman's Benevolent Association of New York City.

And there were also two other witnesses - a taxi-driver and his passenger - one identified both of us and one identified Bashir as being the persons they saw exit the van, shoot the police, and then get back in the van and drive away. And they got some of the reward money. In fact, one of them, the one who identified both Bashir and myself, was subjected to hypnosis, and so his whole identification was questionable because in his pre-hypnotic statement he identified the two men as being in their early twenties and 5'6 or 5'7 in height, and around 150 pounds in weight. At the time, I was 32 and Bashir was roughly 39; I'm 6'3 and Bashir is about 6'1, so the descriptions were totally at odds with what became his testimony in court. And again, these contradictions were raised during the first two trials, and apparently the jury didn't buy it, but I guess it was due to the pressure that was applied to the jurors because the first two trials they deliberated a week before coming back with a verdict - the result of the first trial being a compromise verdict, and at the second trial they could not reach a verdict.

You mentioned that both you and Bashir were working with the Black Panther Party (BPP). Could you tell us something of your own political development and your involvement in the Black Liberation Movement, and what sorts of activities led you to become a target of the government?

Back in the latter part of the 1960's, J. Edgar Hoover, who was then the head of the FBI, had made a statement that he believed the BPP to be the most dangerous organization in existence. He characterized it as a terrorist organization, an extremist organization, a militant radical organization, etc., etc. It was his position that the BPP should be destroyed at all cost; and you are probably familiar with the infamous COINTELPRO program which has been divulged by members of Congress, as well as by people in the legal and political community, and they have gone into great detail about the tactics that were used by the FBI to disrupt and destroy the BPP.

I'll give you a short history of the BPP. It was started by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale in 1966, as a result of

the police brutality that was rampant in the Afrikan-American community and Latino and other non-white communities in America. The Party put its emphasis primarily on controlling police in the Afrikan-American community, and this was done in a lawful manner. It started out in Oakland, California, and then spread throughout California. It then grew and expanded to become national and international. Our focus went from just the issue of police brutality to encompassing the whole issue of the right to self-determination of Afrikan-American people, that is, the right to control the police department, the right to control the schools, and housing, and the economy of our communities, and exemption from fighting for the racist government and its military which did not protect the civil rights and human rights of the Afrikan-American people. We were demanding the release of Afrikan-American people from prison who had been imprisoned falsely or who had not been tried in a fair and impartial manner. We were demanding justice in the courts and we also called for a plebiscite to decide as to what national course Afrikan-American people wanted to take in terms of their destiny.

There were also several programs that the Party initiated. We had a breakfast program because we realized that hunger was a real issue. We instituted free medical and health services in our community, Liberation schools and political education classes for adults. We organized clothing drives from time to time. This was all done in an attempt to meet the needs of our people who were being neglected by the government and the various agencies of the government. These were attempts by us to take matters concerning our destiny into our own hands and hopefully by the example that the Party set it would

encourage the masses of our people to follow suit. So these were the objectives and aims of the BPP - to teach Afrikan-Americans the need for self-reliance.

You mentioned the counter-intelligence program of the FBI, and that both you and Bashir became targeted for this frame-up because of your involvement in political projects within the Afrikan-American community. At what point did you become aware that you yourself were being targeted by the FBI or other police agencies?

Well, I was aware at the time of my involvement in the BPP that the police and different law enforcement agencies kept files on Party members. At rallies they would take photographs, plus they had informants, and agent provocateurs and there was police infiltration of the Party that we were aware of.

As to who they felt was an immediate threat, some of this information did not come to light until after my having been arrested and charged in this case. However, a fellow comrade of mine, Dhoruba Bin Wahad, who served 19 years in prison for a similar charge of attempted murder of a police officer - and back in 1975/1976 I worked with some people on Dhoruba's case - he had a Freedom of Information request that he had sent in to the FBI, and maybe 3 or 4 years later after the suit began, the FBI was forced by the courts to turn over the documents that they had in their possession pertaining to a program they called "NewKill" - the codename of one of their investigations. And they turned over some 30,000 pages of documents. And through my reading of the documents, I learned that I was very much a target of the FBI - there was constant mention of myself and other Party members from the New York area.

So this gave me some idea of the level or the magnitude of interest that they had in BPP members here in New York.

What should activists on the outside do in supporting comrades who are inside prison?

I'm sure you are familiar with the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is facing the death penalty, and that is imminent, and we need to try and work to get people to come out in support of him. There has been some success, as I understand the Governor of Pennsylvania has deferred to sign the death warrant. Pressure has to be kept on continuously because as soon as the concern and the vigilance lower, naturally the State will go and sign the warrant to execute this brother.

What we need, and what we encourage those on the outside to do is try to make inroads into the community. Because for those of us who are incarcerated - while it is true that we need support and that support is what keeps

us alive - there is a need to mobilize the masses, not only around the issue of political prisoners and Prisoners of War, but around their own condition, because, here, from what I have been able to observe from the inside, there appears to be a great deal of apathy among the masses, particularly in the Afrikan-American communities, and the poor and Third World communities. People are concerned about their immediate survival, and they seem to look upon the system as being omnipotent or unchallengeable, or because of the failures they have seen as a result of the activities of some of us, they have taken the attitude that nothing, or next to nothing can be done, and that very little will change no matter what we do.

So there is a need for those with that level of political consciousness and awareness to become more involved and more active in the community.

I think by first concentrating on mobilizing the masses around the political prisoners and Prisoners of War will not solve the problem, and will not be the motivating factor in getting the masses moving. There is a need to motivate and move the masses around their own existence, their own needs - housing, an end to police brutality, jobs, getting people involved in controlling their own destiny.

I think it has to be a two-pronged approach by those of us who still have political consciousness and the spirit to fight. There are those who have political consciousness, but do not display the fighting spirit. You not only have to have the will, you have to put that will into motion and into action.

Write to Abdul and Bashir:

Abdul Majid #83-A-483
s/n Anthony LaBorde
Sullivan Correctional Facility
Box A-G
Fallsburg, NY
12733 USA

Bashir Hameed #82-A-6313
s/n James York
135 State Street
Auburn, NY
13024 USA

For more information:

Queens Two Support Coalition
P.O. Box 1354
Brooklyn, NY
11247 USA

New York 3 Update

On June 26 and 27, 1992, the New York 3, Herman Bell, Jali Muntaquin (s/n Anthony Bottom), and Albert "Nuh" Washington - Black Liberation Army p.o.w.'s since 1971 - were together for the first time in 17 years. They came together in a New York State court for an evidentiary hearing in an effort to overturn their 1975 conviction.

The NY3 are victims of the U.S. government's 1970's COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) which targeted Afrikan-American and progressive organizations for extermination and disruption. In 1975, after their third trial the New York 3 were convicted in the 1971 assassination of two New York City police officers. Since that time information released about COINTELPRO shows that the prosecution repressed crucial evidence necessary for their defence. The FBI ballistics tests had proven that the guns reported to belong to the NY3 were not the weapons involved in the assassinations. The New York prosecutors knew this and deliberately withheld it from the defence attorneys and jury.

The recent June hearings, which took place after 17 years of appeal attempts, included the FBI reports and testimony from a former NYC police sergeant who worked on the case. While on the stand he admitted that the police and the prosecution had manipulated and withheld statements and evidence to obtain the convictions.

From this hearing, the attorneys for the NY3 originally filed motions on 15 separate violations, but the judge only permitted arguments over the repressed information about the ballistics evidence. If a ruling is made that the NY3 did not receive a fair trial it will be possible for their release since the NYC police department has already destroyed the evidence for this case.

(From The Black Panther Fall 1992, Vol.1 No.4)



To Do What Is Possible, Rather Than What Is Permitted

"I feel that this was the right thing to do, and I'm glad we did it. Only when ordinary people like us take the waging of peace and disarmament as seriously as soldiers take war can we say that we have listened to the cries of the victims. Behind the shiny facade of Rockwell International's headquarters lie the horribly-burned children and terrorized third-world civilians fleeing NavSTAR-guided bombing from Guatemala to Indonesia, and ultimately people everywhere under the threat of an automated nuclear first-strike holocaust that G.P.S. makes possible." - Peter Lumsdaine

"Our disarmament action can point the way to a renewed anti-militarist campaign that builds on the foundation laid down by past Plowshares actions, growing out of that tradition and yet a challenge to it. This action was a repudiation to all - whether friend or foe of the peace movement - who have clung to the assumption that only symbolic action is possible." - Keith Kjoller

On May 10th, 1992, Keith Kjoller and Peter Lumsdaine, both of Santa Cruz, CA, broke into the world headquarters of Rockwell International in Seal Beach, CA and dismantled a NavSTAR (Navigational System Time and Ranging) satellite with axes.

According to affidavits given to the F.B.I. by Rockwell (a major military contractor), the damage to the \$50 million satellite and the "clean room where seven other NavSTAR satellites were being assembled is in excess of \$2.8 million."

The action was also highly effective in terms of its impact on the continued deployment of the Global Positioning System (GPS). Bob Aldridge, a former Lockheed Missiles and Space Company engineer who is now a peace activist, writes, "It has finally happened. A citizen intervention action has significantly slowed the arms race. In the past they have caused delays - usually for minutes or hours, occasionally days. But the Mothers' Day action last May 10th at Rockwell's Seal Beach facility has shut down NavSTAR for months." The satellites were scheduled to launch every 2-3 months, but as of mid-October none has been launched since the action.

Because Keith and Peter halted production at a time when the system was only partially deployed (13 of 24 satellites are currently in orbit) they have significantly limited the U.S. military's ability to wage war. According to Aldridge, "since each satellite adds about one hour to NavSTAR's availability, Keith and Peter have deprived the military of two to three hours per day of warmaking. That is a significant act of disarmament."

The NavSTAR satellites were chosen because of the integral role they play in the U.S. military's plans to

dominate the people of the earth through the use of space technology. NavSTAR GPS is, as of now, a partially deployed constellation of satellites which are designed to give the military precise information about location (longitude, latitude, and altitude within 16 feet, velocity within a quarter of a mile per hour, and time within one ten-millionth of a second) in all weather, in all terrain, at all times, anywhere on the planet.

During much of the Cold War (1940's through 1980's), nuclear confrontation was deterred, it may be argued, due to the fact that neither side thought that it could "win" a nuclear confrontation. The ideological theory used to justify this state of tense limbo was appropriately called MAD - Mutually Assured Destruction. While MAD made just about everyone sick with worry, fear of retaliation may have kept either side from initiating a nuclear attack. But while MAD was used by pundits to reassure a doubting public, the Pentagon was quietly attempting to gain an advantage over their rivals. According to testimony from such people as former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (1978), former Defense Secretary Harold Brown (1979), and General David Jones (1979), MAD was not the preferred policy. What the military sought, and what they are very close to having, is first strike capability.

While MAD's precarious idea of peace through strength (or intimidation, or retaliatory genocide) was dangerous, first strike theory is even more pernicious. And NavSTAR is the embodiment of that theory. One of NavSTAR's primary purposes is to guide nuclear missiles to their targets (e.g. "enemy" missile silos) before the "enemy" is able to retaliate. Thus, in the twisted logic of the first strike theory, a nuclear war is now seen as "winnable" because the U.S. can strike first, without being struck back. It is NavSTAR's extremely accurate targeting information, in conjunction with new, faster missiles that have made the first strike theory a possibility for the first time.

NavSTAR GPS has even farther-reaching implications. It can be utilized not only with nuclear weapons systems, but with conventional weapons systems as well. NavSTAR was used extensively during the Persian Gulf War, guiding missiles to both military and civilian targets. NavSTAR can also be deployed against guerrilla movements, for patrolling nation-state borders, and in cases of domestic civil unrest. Because NavSTAR can provide extremely accurate targeting information at all times, it effectively removes the advantage that local resistance groups have had until now. Before the deployment of NavSTAR, guerrilla "focos" were able to move around easily and escape government ground patrols and helicopter gunships because of their extensive knowl-

edge of the local terrain. With NavSTAR there will be no place to hide. In other words, NavSTAR is inherently an instrument of oppression because it enables a distant power to control local communities - plot globally, dominate locally.

Keith and Peter were sentenced on September 21st in Federal Court in Orange County CA. When Keith addressed the court he spoke of the urgent necessity of finding alternatives to war and violence for solving our differences. In order to make that a reality he said that it is necessary to take direct action: "I tried to do what was possible rather than what was permitted. I tried to do what was right rather than what was convenient". Keith responded to the Probation Department's recommendation that the two receive longer sentences because their action could be considered a "terrorist act", and they showed no remorse and didn't agree that the law was just, saying that it troubled him deeply because it insulted the daily work that tens of thousands of people do for peace and justice.

Peter spoke articulately of being inspired by the Gospel of Jesus, indicating that in order for swords to turn into plowshares, the hammer has to fall. (Peter is a Christian, Keith an atheist) He made an impassioned plea on behalf of "those who are not here, those who have no standing", and explained that it was his love for his four year-old daughter Lucy and "for the children and people of the planet... that gave me the strength to go on and split open this... engine of murder and terror called NavSTAR". He also told of the suffering and sacrifice that the people of the Philippines, Guatemala, and other places make each day - both of their own choosing and out of necessity. Peter ended by quoting Robert Coles: "The issue is not whether we 'agree' with what we have heard and read and studied. The issue is us and what we have become".

Before pronouncing the sentence the judge also responded to the Probation Department's report. He said it was not necessary to show remorse, only to accept responsibility, and he could not imagine a case in which responsibility was more clearly accepted. He went on to say that Peter and Keith acted out of their consciences, in the American tradition of civil disobedience.

The judge, however, apparently did not feel up to joining in that tradition. He sentenced Keith to 18 months and Peter to 24 months in federal prison. Each received 3 years of supervised release, during which they may not go within 500 feet of any military installation or facility where military equipment is tested, stored or produced. They must also make what the Probation Department considers a reasonable effort to find an appropriate job in order to pay restitution: each must pay Rockwell \$15,000 within 5 years of their release.



If you would like more information, or would like to become involved in on-going resistance organizing call (408) 426-7970 or (415) 824-0214. Donations to support Peter's four-year-old daughter, Lucy can be sent to her mother, Jean Petersen at P.O. Box 8003, Santa Cruz, CA 95061. Donations to support Keith and Peter, and resistance organizing may be made out to Stop First Strike, Box 11645, Berkeley, CA 94701. If you care to correspond directly with them you may write to Keith Kjoller #94358-012, or Peter Lumsdaine #94359-012, Metropolitan Detention Center, P.O. Box 1500, Los Angeles CA 90053, USA. Peace. No Fate!

Shawnee Unit - A Control Unit For Women

In May of this year, a nationally coordinated mobilization against control units took place. The call was issued by the Puerto Rican and New Afrikan liberation movements, the Committee to End the Marion Lock-down (CEML), and other solidarity organizations on the twentieth anniversary of the Attica Rebellion. The first control unit was also built twenty years ago, as part of a wave of repression carried out by the government against the upsurge of revolutionary and progressive movements in that period. The mobilization condemned the Marionization of prisons and the proliferation of control units. In the preceding months a process of education by the sponsors focused on:

- The use of control units as tools of political repression. A past warden of Marion has stated: "The purpose of the Marion control unit is to control revolutionary attitudes in the prison system and in society at large.
- The fact that the national oppression and white supremacy of U.S. society determines who is incarcerated in these units.
- The brutal physical and psychological conditions in the control units.

There was no mention of women and women's control units in the mobilization propaganda. The history of the use of control units against women, including the current federal incarceration, the Shawnee Unit at Marianna, Florida, was ignored. A false picture was projected

- that women are exempt from placement in control units; that Shawnee is not a control unit because it does not use the same physical brutality as men's control units.

This view undermines the struggle against control units. Important milestones are overlooked; the mobilization against the Cardinal Unit at Alderson, West Virginia, and the national campaign to shut down the High Security Unit (HSU) at Lexington, Kentucky. These efforts were significant because of the explicit political mission of these units: targeting women political prisoners and Prisoners of War from the Puerto Rican Independ-

ence Movement and white anti-imperialist movement.

Sidelining women as equal participants in the struggle to close all control units has deeper implications. It diminishes the importance of women's resistance. It ignores the brutality of psychological methods of control and behaviour modification. It plays into the government mythology that women are more submissive and open to manipulation. And because a number of political prisoners and Prisoners of War have spent the majority of our sentences in control units, this omission further distances us from our movements, indirectly playing into the principle objective of the government: isolation. By isolation we don't mean the physical barriers created by any incarceration, but rather the lack of an organic relationship to the very movements and struggles that we were part of - the activities for which we are imprisoned. By isolation we mean the turning of political prisoners into symbols to be remembered as historical leftovers of a more militant past, while ignoring them as continuing participants in today's progressive movements.

The government relies on secrecy and silence to accomplish its goals. This article was written to break with the secrecy and silence of Shawnee Unit; to recognize women as equal participants in the struggle to shut down all control units; and to be responsible to ongoing political struggle.

Shawnee Is A Control Unit

CEML, in *Walkin' Steel*, defines a control unit as a "combination of physical conditions, the policies which determine who is sent there, and the overall purpose of the unit".

Shawnee Unit was opened by the BOP in August 1988, after the small group isolation experiment at Lexington HSU was shutdown. The political and security

mission of Shawnee Unit is the same as that of the HSU: to control, isolate and neutralize women who, for varying reasons, pose either a political, escape, or disruption threat. Neutralization insures that the women imprisoned here will never leave prison with the full capacity to function. Central to the mission is the understanding that Washington can decide at any point to transfer any woman political prisoner or Prisoner of War here. The recent transfer of Laura Whitehorn is a case in point.

A distinct profile emerges: membership in or association with any of the national liberation movements, particularly the Puerto Rican and New Afrikan Independence Movements (as determined by the FBI); on-going surveillance and counterinsurgency against the progressive movements; classification of political acts as "sophisticated criminal conspiracies", characterized by employment of armed struggle; and punishment for continued commitment to non-collaboration. Reflecting the centrality of the oppression of Black people in the history of the U.S., we have been told that we were designated here because of our conviction in or association with the so-called "Brinks Case." (Underlying all the charges in this case, now 11 years old, is the struggle for self-determination by Black people and active solidarity with this struggle by white anti-imperialists.) The unit serves as a public admonishment to those who would challenge the supremacy of the U.S. - deterrence and isolation are central to its mission. It also serves to maintain control over all women in BOP prisons: in less than 24 hours, twelve women who were targeted as leadership of the recent demonstration by women at Lexington against police violence were transferred here.

Once a control unit is set up, it fulfils many needs. The BOP operates Shawnee with some flexibility. Protected witnesses, disciplinary cases, high profile indi-

Resistance At F.C.I. Lexington

On 12-14 August, the first sustained act of resistance by women prisoners in the u.s. federal prison system in twenty years took place.

Here's what happened:

On Wednesday night, August 12, there was an argument between two prisoners in the central yard area ("Central Park") at about 8:30 p.m. It was over quickly and everyone was walking away, towards the housing units, because we have to be inside at 9 p.m. A lieutenant came running to see what had happened - pulling on his black leather gloves. He yelled, "Hey, you! Stop!" When no one stopped he grabbed the first Black woman that he saw, lifted her in the air, and body-slammed her to the ground. Other women yelled at him, saying she wasn't even involved in the argument, but he kept on attacking her - putting his knee in the back of her neck and smashing her face to the pavement. He pulled her hands behind her back, cuffed her, dragged her to her feet, and another guard took her to the lieutenants's office.

This was witnessed by about one hundred women. They were all very upset by it, and gathered to talk to the Captain. At 9 p.m., all but about fifteen returned to their housing units, after being assured that the beaten woman would be released back into general population, and that a thorough investigation would be undertaken.

But on Thursday morning it turned out that the woman had not been released, and some of the women who had witnessed the incident had been put in the hole ("segregation") as well. Despite the promise of an investigation, by 3 p.m. prisoners were told that the investigation was completed, and no further statements would be

taken.

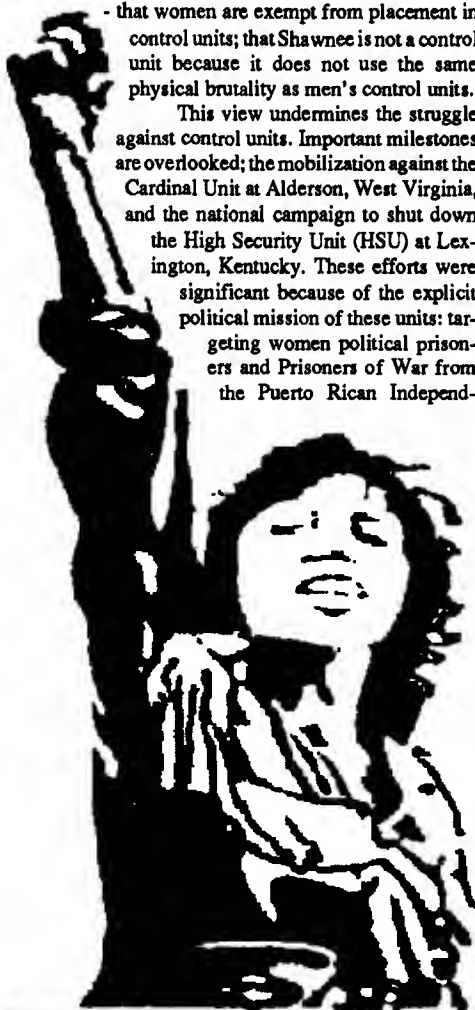
This was not the first instance of physical brutality at Lexington - nor, certainly of racism. The male guards have been putting their hands on us more and more - both in frequent pat searches and whenever they want us to move, to stop, or whatever. This particular lieutenant had threatened several women with brutality. The normally high level of racism had also recently heightened, following the Los Angeles verdict and the uprisings there. Several Black women who had complained of prejudice had been put in the hole for "inciting to riot."

But this time it all struck a nerve. On Thursday word travelled: don't go in at 4 p.m. (the major daily "standing count" throughout the Bureau of Prisons) Stay out in Central Park and demand the women be released from the hole - and the lieutenant suspended.

At 3:50 p.m., when the hourly "movement" began, the scene in Central Park was tense and exciting. Usually, it's rush hour - 1900 women, in the largest woman's prison in the world, rushing to the units to try and get a few things done before the 4 p.m. count. On this Thursday, instead, it was like gridlock: everyone moved slowly, if at all, waiting to see what would happen.

At 4 p.m., an announcement ordered us all to go inside for the count. Many did, but ninety of us stayed out, moving into the center of the Park. We sang Bob Marley's "Stand up for your rights", and chanted "Stop Police Brutality", "We Want Justice", "Let Them Out of Seg.", and "Figueroa (the lieutenant) must go". Ringed by guards - including a S.O.R.T. (SWAT) team in full

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viduals, members of various Columbian cartels, and women with successful escape histories are imprisoned here. What distinguishes them from the political prisoners is their ability to transfer out of Shawnee. Over the past year, there has been a massive movement out of the unit. But the political prisoners, despite repeated requests to be transferred, have been excluded from this.

Psychological Control

To wash away the brutal image of the HSU, the BOP has created the deception that life at Shawnee is normal, not designated or manipulated. The physical plant is designed to deflect any concern from the outside about human rights abuses - it looks comfortable and attractive. This appearance is a lie.

The women of Shawnee live in a psychologically assaultive environment that aims at destabilizing women's personal and social identities. This is true of the prison system as a whole; here it has been elevated to a primary weapon, implemented through a physical layout and day-to-day regimen that produce inwardness and self-containment. The unit is a small triangle with a small yard. Within this severely limited space, women are under constant scrutiny and observation. In the unit, cameras and listening devices (the latter are installed in every cell) insure constant surveillance and control of even the most intimate conversation. Lockdown is not necessary because there is nowhere to go, and individuals can be observed and controlled better while having the illusion of some mobility.

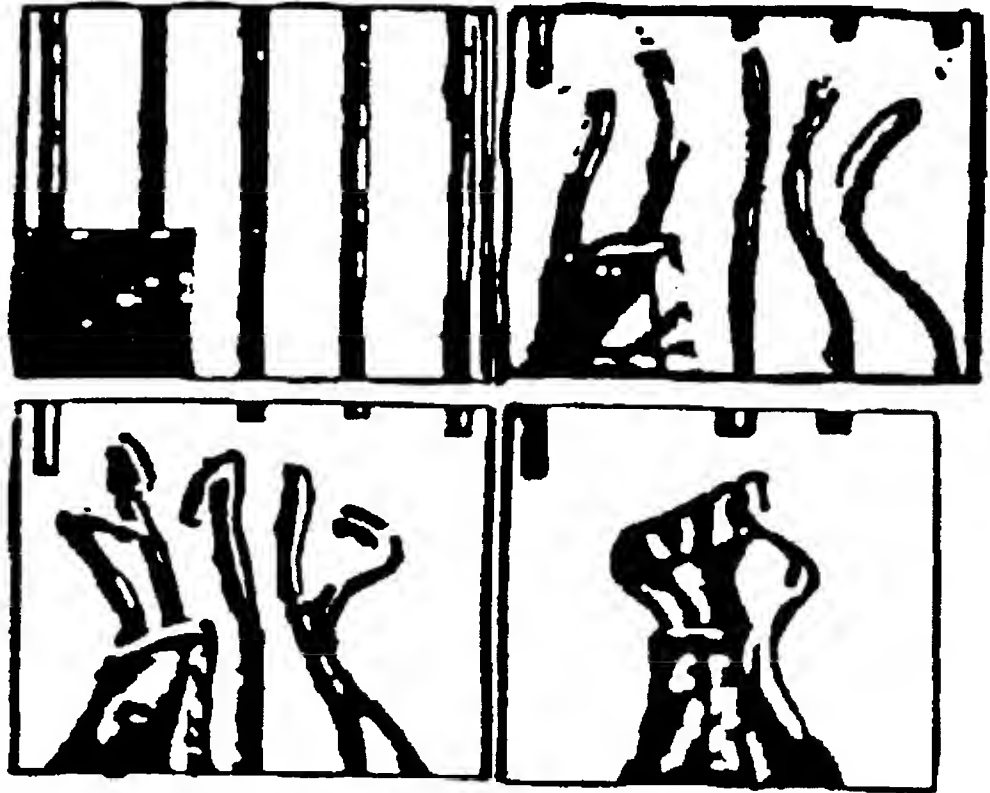
The fences around the yard - the only place where one could have any sense that an outside world existed - were recently covered with green cloth, further hammering into the women the sense of being completely apart and separate. It is one thing to be imprisoned in this tiny isolation unit for a year or two, another to be told one will be here for three more decades - that this small unit will be one's world for the rest of one's life.

Compared to the other federal prisons for women, Shawnee is like being in a suffocating cocoon. What replaces visual stimulation and communication is T. As in Marion control unit, there is a T in every cell - the perfect answer to any complaints about isolation or boredom. T provides the major link to the world - a link which conveniently produces passivity and inculcates "family values".

The intense physical limitations are compounded by a total lack of educational, training, or recreational programs. At a time when such programs are being expanded at other prisons, here, at the end of the line, women are not worthy of even the pretence of rehabilitation. The geographical location of Shawnee makes contact with family and community an almost impossible task. Gradually, women here begin to lose their ability to relate to the outside world. As time moves on, frustration sets in, accompanied by alienation and despair. The result is the creation of dysfunctional individuals who are completely self-involved, unable to participate in organized social activities, and unprepared for eventual reintegration into life on the outside: women who resist less, demand less, and see others as fierce competitors for the few privileges allowed.

Competition and individualism become the defining characteristics of personality distortion here. The staff seeks out the most needy personalities and molds them into informants. Unit life has been rocked by a number of internal investigations begun when individual prisoners "confided" in ambitious staff members. Snitching and cooperation are the pillars of the "justice system". Those who refuse to accept this standard of behaviour are isolated and targeted by those who do. In the tiny world of the unit, this can have a massive effect on one's daily life.

A system of hierarchical privileges governs the unit and destroys any potential unity. Small comforts, such as



personal clothing, have become the mechanism through which cooperation and collaboration are obtained. The latest wrinkle is the institution of "privileged housing" - the arbitrary designation of a limited number of cells on the upper tier as a reward for acceptable behaviour. This is classic behaviour modification. The unit is in a constant state of uproar over the daily moves that enforce the fall from privileged status.

White Supremacy And Racism

There are close to 90 women imprisoned at Shawnee: 1/3 Black women from various parts of the world, 1/3 Latin women, 1/3 white women, and a very small number of Native American women. The numerical balance belies the hegemony of white supremacist ideology. As outside the walls, a permanent conflict exists between Black people and those in power. Prisoners experience and are affected by the sharpening of conflict on the outside and the increasing national oppression experienced by Black people in particular. Events in California have given focus to the discontent and heightened the contradictions. Since May, an unprecedented number of Black women have been put in the hole - more than the total for the past two years. Currently, five women from the unit are in the hole; all are Black. And while the administration says that they do not deal with gangs, "Boyz 'N the Hood" and "Jungle Fever" were banned from the prison after the Aryan Brotherhood protested.

A strict segregationist policy determines who gets the jobs. After four years, no Black women have ever worked for education or recreation, except in janitorial jobs. It has taken just as long to place a Black woman in commissary and to promote one woman to be a trainer in the UNICOR factory. All Black staff have left the unit, eliminating the small cushion they provided. This is significant, as staff in the federal system determine everything from access to family to release conditions.

Racism governs how religion can be practised. Islam, Judaism, and Native American religions are either totally ignored or marginalized. One cannot help but notice this, since there is a daily diet of fundamentalist Protestant and Catholic services, seminars and retreats.

Superexploitation Of Women's Labour

Like B block at Marion, there is no productive labour at Shawnee besides UNICOR. Unit life is organized to facilitate the functioning of the Automated Data Processing (ADP) factory. Nearly 40 women work here, twelve hours a day and five more hours on Saturday. The forced rhythm of this work has made the ADP factory the most profitable UNICOR operation in the BOP for its size. The complete lack of any other jobs, the need for funds, the lack of family support, the enormous expense of living in Shawnee, all push women into UNICOR, into intense competition and into an acceptance of their exploitation. Unlike general population prisons, Shawnee prisoners are not even permitted to work in jobs maintaining the physical plant. Removing productive labour is an element in destroying human identity and self-worth.

The Use Of Violence Against Women In Prisons Is Increasing

The recent attacks by male guards at Lexington, and a similar incident here at Shawnee, illustrate the marked tendency towards using greater force to control women prisoners. While lower security women are being sent to minimum security facilities, those left in high security prisons will be more and more vulnerable to physical attack - justified by being characterized by the BOP as "dangerous".

Misogyny And Homophobia

Women in prison are at the very bottom. The misogyny and contempt for women in the society as a whole are compounded by the way the prison system is organized to exploit and utilize women's oppression. The BOP characterizes some women as "dangerous" and "terrorist" (having gone beyond the bounds of acceptable female behaviour in the U.S.), making them the target of particularized repression, scorn and hatred. To be classified maximum security is to be seen as less than human, by definition not eligible for "rehabilitation".

All women's prisons operate on the all-pervasive threat of sexual assault and the dehumanizing invasion of privacy. Throughout the state and federal system in the U.S., invasive "pat searches" of women by male guards

ensure that a women is daily reminded of her powerlessness; she cannot even defend her own body. In the control unit there is absolutely no privacy: windows in the cell doors (which cannot be covered), patrolling of the unit by male guards, and the presence of the bathrooms in the cells guarantee this. The voyeuristic nature of the constant surveillance is a matter of record: in the past year alone there have been three major internal investigations of sexual harassment and misconduct by male officers - including rape.

Programs that exist in other women's prisons, addressing the particular needs of women, are deemed frivolous at Shawnee. Most women here are mothers, but no support at all is given to efforts to maintain the relationship between mother and child. Similarly, if Shawnee were not a control unit, then education, recreation, religious and cultural programs should be on a par with those at Lewisburg, Leavenworth, and Lumpoc (three men's high security prisons). But not a single program available in those prisons is available here.

The median age of the women here is 37 - a situation distinct from any other women's prison. Nearly everyone is doing more than 15 years; more than 10 women are serving life sentences without parole. Menopause is the main medical problem in the unit. Menopause is an emotional as well as a physiological process. Ignoring this is a pillar of misogynist Western medicine. In the repressive reality of Shawnee, refusal to recognize and treat the symptoms of menopause becomes a cruel means of punishment and an attack on the integrity of one's personality.

Security determines all medical care. Two women who have suffered strokes here were both denied access to necessary treatment in a hospital: a life-threatening decision, made solely for "security reasons."

Intense isolation and lack of activities mean that the loving relationships that provide intimacy and comfort to women in all prisons are of heightened importance here. Until recently, a seemingly tolerant attitude towards lesbian relationships was actually a form of control. For lesbian relationships to function without disciplinary intervention by the police, the women had to negotiate with and in some instances work for, the staff. This tolerance was viewed as necessary because the relationships served as a safety valve for the tensions and anger in the population. As a result of the system of police-sanctioned tolerance, people tended to elevate the individual relationships above any collective alliances that might endanger the administration's rule over the unit.

This situation served to increase the already intense homophobia in the population. A new administration has now ended the tolerance, and lesbians are now suffering greater harassment and discrimination. A witch hunt is underway to identify lesbians and couples engaging in homosexual behaviour.

Together with racism, misogyny and homophobia define conditions here. When coupled with the repressive practices of a control unit, psychological disablement can result - fulfilling the Shawnee mission.

Conclusion

Partly as a result of the astronomic rise in the number of women in prison and the resulting public interest in women's prisons, and partly as a result of the struggle against the Lexington HSU, the BOP has to be very careful not to appear to be brutal in its treatment of women prisoners. The investigations of the HSU by Amnesty International, the Methodist Church, the American Civil Liberties Union and others struck a nerve in Washington. The experiment carried out within the walls of the HSU failed because of the personal and political resistance of those inside and outside the walls. But this defeat did not deter the BOP from its stated goals. It just drove them to hide them cosmetically behind a veneer of new paint and the momentary elimination of the most notorious abuses. The BOP always denies the truth of its workings. It denies the existence of control units and this unit in particular, not even listing it in the BOP Register of Prisons. Nevertheless, Shawnee is the present women's version of the Marionization of the prison system. The next one is supposed to be opened in North Carolina in 1994. The movement should not fall into the trap and ignore the particular control strategy aimed at women. Uncovering and exposing the reality that the Shawnee Unit is a control unit will contribute to the movement against all control units.

Silvia Baraldini
Marilyn Buck
Susan Rosenberg
Laura Whitehorn

Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoners

Marianna, Florida

August 1992

Geronimo Ji Jaga (Pratt)

Nearly 23 years have passed since Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) was targeted for "neutralization" by J. Edgar Hoover's infamous COINTELPRO, framed by the FBI and the LAPD, and imprisoned for his political work with the Black Panther Party. Recently Geronimo marked his 45th birthday - a serious milestone because this means that he has now spent more than half his life in prison for a crime he did not commit.

Geronimo appeared before the parole board for the tenth time in December 1991. Although he was denied justice once again, the Parole Board was presented with evidence of community support for Geronimo's immediate release. This evidence included 10,000 petition signatures and many letters of support from prominent public officials, members of the entertainment industry, union officials, and religious leaders, and a resolution from the City Council of Oakland, California - the birthplace of the Black Panther Party - calling for Geronimo's freedom on behalf of the city's 400,000 residents.

While Geronimo was again denied parole, the parole board did take the unusual step of setting Geronimo's next parole hearing in one year rather than the usual two or three. They also recommended that Geronimo be transferred to a treatment centre for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from which he suffers due to his experiences in Vietnam.

The actions of the parole board and the California Department of Corrections in Geronimo's case are a clear indication that the COINTELPRO activities of the FBI continue to this day. While it is evident that the government will do almost anything to keep Geronimo locked up, the members of the International Campaign

believe that Geronimo's parole hearing in December, 1992, can be used to increase community awareness of political prisoners and Prisoners of War in the U.S., and to turn up the pressure on the state to free Geronimo. For this, your help is needed:

Write a letter to the parole board, stating your support for Geronimo's release. Address it to:

John Gillis, Chairperson
California Board of Prison Terms
545 Downtown Plaza, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA
95814 USA

For more information on the campaign to free Geronimo, write to:

International Campaign to Free Geronimo Ji Jaga (Pratt)
P.O. Box 3585
Oakland, CA
94609 USA

Write to Geronimo:

Geronimo Ji Jaga (Pratt) #B40319
P.O. Box 1902B 1C-211U
Tehachapi, CA
93581 USA

[Adapted from a leaflet from the International Campaign to Free Geronimo Ji Jaga (Pratt)]

...Resistance At Lexington continued from page 16

regalia - we demanded to speak to the Captain. While we demonstrated we heard shouts of support from the windows of the housing units and at least two "all available officers" codes to different units - meaning that the women who had returned to the units for count were doing some kind of support actions too.

We had to shout the Captain down, when he finally came to talk to us, because he was telling too many lies. He finally said the lieutenant would be back at work on Monday, and we all knew there was no point in any further discussion. We were handcuffed and escorted to seg - most of us being taken to the old High Security Unit, which has been out of use almost entirely since the BOP was forced to close it in 1988. Seven women to a cell, no blankets, no water - it was payback time.

The next day, twelve of us were taken out and chained up on a bus to Marianna, Florida (the new women's high security unit). As each of us was taken out of prison the whole place was locked down. But it was midday, so there were over 100 women in Central Park on their lunch breaks. As each of us was escorted through the Park, we were cheered - loudly, enthusiastically, joyfully - by everyone there.

I've since learned that while we were in transit to Marianna, a smaller group of women repeated the action in Central Park at 4 p.m. There were also quite a few small

fires set in various housing units during the night. And a number of women were shipped out to Pleasanton after we twelve were shipped here to Marianna.

It was the first active resistance in a federal women's prison in the U.S. in twenty years.

For a few brief moments, we felt free. As we moved into Central Park, defying the daily, grinding regulations and control of prison life, we were liberated for the fear that holds prisoners in check. We had the power of justice on our side - and in our eyes as we looked at one another.

The most common thing you hear people say at Lexington is: "If the men (prisoners - the prison used to be co-ed) were here, the police wouldn't get away with this. Women don't stick together, so the prison can put anything they want on us."

We proved that's not true. The racism and brutality that go down everyday just didn't go down on this day. We'd had enough and we trusted and respected ourselves and one another enough to stand up together. The demonstration was international - inspired primarily by Jamaican, Haitian and African-American women, it was joined by Latina women and some white women as well. It was clear, for once, that if the police could continue to attack Black women (as they do everyday - for example, at any given time the hole holds more Black women than any other nationality), then no one would be safe.

continued on page 35...

"We Embrace Death With Weapons In Our Hands And Slogans On Our Lips!"

On April 16/17, there were raids on six houses in Istanbul. It was a large-scale, carefully planned attack by the Turkish army and police force, along with the Turkish secret service (MIT). The six houses had been 'identified' as the homes or hiding places of active Devrimci Sol members. Devrimci Sol (Revolutionary Left) is an illegal organization in Turkey, and the group has carried out more than 50 major armed actions since 1985 against Turkish military leaders and former junta members.

The French paper 'Liberation' described the attack as "an execution by the Turkish police, during which 11 people, 5 men and 6 women, were killed and 6 others were wounded. According to police, those killed and two of those wounded and arrested could not be identified, since they had false identification papers. But they believe that all the terrorists were members of the Dev Sol central committee. Not a single one of the security forces were killed or wounded during the operation, which has been described by human rights advocates as an arbitrary execution." (Liberation, 20.4.92)

The involvement of the army in this blood-bath came despite the fact that official state power in Turkey now rests in the 'civilian' hands of president Demirel. This 'democratization' has not silenced fears of a possible military coup. Not even the governor of Istanbul has denied the fact that the MIT took part in the action, a large-scale operation which was the result of a civilian's tip-off to police. And the Turkish interior minister made the following comment regarding the mass-murder: "This was the first operation, we shall defeat them. We shall soon make up for what is lacking in the police. The 120 foreign-trained secret service agents will first be utilized to make up for our lack of information. There will be more." (Gunaydin, 21.4.92). Turkey has an increasingly important role to play in the U.S.'s New World Order - police agent for the Middle East - but at the same time has to cope with a strong internal opposition. This they hope to quickly eradicate. Considering the fact that Dev Sol commands a lot of support in certain sectors of the population, Turkey's ruling powers have to continually resort to terror and intimidation. Of this, Ercan Kanar, the head of a moderate human rights organization, remarked: "The 11 persons killed on April 17 could have been taken alive if the government had wished. The executions took place without any legal basis and these destructive operations are taking place as if human rights have been completely put aside." (Hurriyet, 22.4.92). Human rights have been disregarded ever since the days of the junta, and the exploitation and impoverishment of the population has continued, despite the transfer of power from generals to civilians. Thus, human rights are not even an issue; they weren't then, and they aren't now, despite the new democratic veneer.

The following (translated from issue 12 of the Dutch paper Konfrontatie) is the transcript of a telephone call made 30 minutes after the April 17 operation was underway. Devrimci Sol militants Sabo, Eda, and Taskin, inside their besieged house in Ciftehavuzlar, were on the phone with the chairperson of TAYAD, Fatma Sesen, and kept her informed of the events taking place.

The Last Words

00.20

(A woman's voice on the phone)

Sabo: Hello. They have surrounded our house. A half an hour ago. We have been keeping them busy for a half an hour. We have burned all our documents in the bathroom. We have not left a single trace behind. But they'll shoot their way in soon. We will defend ourselves. We will join Niyazi, Apo, and Haydar (1). We will join the July 12th martyrs (2). My comrade here next to me would like to speak with you.

Eda: We, as Devrimci Sol fighters, will die for the Turkish people. We feel very good. We are very calm. Just like our comrades in Kizildere (3) and Malatya (4), we will greet death laughing and struggling. Long live Devrimci Sol! Long live our leader Dursun Karatas! Long live our armed revolutionary units! Farewell. We love you all and our people very much.

Sabo: We are calling you, because you are the head of TAYAD (5). We want you to pass on what you have heard and what we have said to the whole world through your newspaper... Go outside and call them. Don't keep the line busy... Get the message out quickly. Has news come in from Sinan (6) yet? Ask about Sinan. Turn the news on. Try to get information. Wait a minute. I repeat. At this moment our house is surrounded. We have been keeping them busy for half an hour. All documents, including identification papers, have been burned. The shoot-out will begin soon. We will resist. We will die laughing, like like our comrades who were murdered in the houses, streets, and mountains of Malatya. We will die like Hamiyet and Olcay (7). We will resist like

Devrimci Sol fighters. We want to get this out to the world via your newspaper. You are our witness. You must report everything you have heard. We want to be buried next to the July 12 martyrs. The Devrimci Sol flag must fly at our funeral. Our people must take part. Help our families, give them information. We are hanging up now. I will call back soon. Keep the line free.

01.20

Sabo: Has there been any news from Sinan? Have you all called? Have you watched the news? They are talking about Sinan. Please don't keep the line busy! Call from outside if you have to make a call. (Shots can be heard over the phone.) They have started shooting, do you hear? Do you want me to hang up?"

Answer: No!

Sabo: Ok. (Slogans are heard over the phone) Long live Devrimci Sol! Destroy fascism! Long live our struggle! Long live the July 12 martyrs! Long live our resistance in Malatya! Long live our resistance! Long live Kizildere!

Sabo: Look... Get the message out, don't delay. (Intensive shooting) I have to hang up!

02.30

Sabo: Is there any news from Sinan? Have you all gotten any message? Have you... heard anything? There are two telephones. Let them ring. They say they have killed Sinan.

(Eda's voice is heard, shouting at the police.)



Eda: You all can't touch Sinan.

Sabo: They are constantly shouting insults at us. Especially at me. Of course we answer. You all will hear it. When they came, they said they were tax collectors. Then they called me Ms. Sabahat. (Shots, slogans, the doorbell, pounding on the door.) Long live our armed revolutionary units! Long live our leader Dursun Karatas! Long live Devrimci Sol!

Sabo: When we looked through the peep-hole, we saw that they had bullet-proof vests on. They say that Sinan is dead. Please give me some information. Call someone. At this moment, they are upstairs. They are trying to make a hole through the ceiling. (The sound of shots, pounding on the door, shouts from police.)

Eda's voice: Come on, bring your tanks and bombs, come inside, our bodies alone are enough to scare you. We come into your dreams and make them nightmares. You are all shuddering with fear. Don't think you can hide. You are mistaken. Even if only one tiny hole is left, we shall use it. You can't escape revolutionary justice. Our comrades will punish you. (More insults from the police.)

Sabo: You all have thousands of fathers and mothers. Your fathers are Bush and your mothers are Manukyan (8). You were born and raised in a sewer. (Slogans) Long live our revolutionary justice! Long live our armed revolutionary units! Long live Devrimci Sol! (The shooting is intensive; the door is being rammed; they continue to say farewell on the phone.)

Sabo: They have dropped gas through the chimney. We are on the 12th floor. They are threatening to throw us to the ground from the 12th floor. They say that this house belongs to the organization. They are ramming the door. They can't open it. The door is made of steel. But they have made a big hole in it. (Intensive shooting) I am going to help my comrades. Farewell! (Shots, slogans) Long live Devrimci Sol! Long live our leader Dursun Karatas! Long live the brotherhood of the Turkish and Kurdish peoples! The resistance of the Turkish and Kurdish peoples will defeat fascism! (More gun shots)

Sabo: We have strengthened the barricade. They can't get the door open. A comrade was wounded in his arm.

They say Sinan has been killed. Inform people of his condition. Look...ask for "uncle". Comrades know him. They are talking about the Ikizler apartment. They have mentioned the names Sinan and Gunes. They say they have made several raids. It could be a heavy blow. Ask, listen for news. *(More shooting, slogans)* They are getting ready to use bombs. We feel good and calm. *(The police shout insults; the comrades reply.)* We shall bloom like red wild flowers all across the land!

Eda: Our Devrimci Sol flag shall fly all over Turkey. You can't touch Sinan. Our comrades will punish you! Nothing can save you.

Sabo: I am sitting here thinking and I want to help my comrades. I wonder how they found us? I don't know. Nothing was wrong when I went outside. If something happened, it must have been today. We burned all the documents in the bathroom. We always have a supply of gasoline on hand. We burned the identification papers. And the money. We don't want to leave anything behind. Sorry. There's still money in our bags. We forgot to look. Report all of this. We burned all the documents. There is nothing more. *(Slogans, shots)* Can you hear me? I still have two comrades with me. They are worth a lot. They have resisted well.

Eda: Don't believe [the police], my people. They lie. *(She is hard to hear.)*

Sabo: The people outside are on our side. Except for one woman. But we gave her the correct answer. Tell the newspapers to send reporters. I want our friends to see this. Send the TAYAD mothers. Our house is around the corner from the Meteorological Bureau in Göztepe (9), parallel to the Baghdadstreet, the Karasu apartment. You'll know you're in the neighborhood when you see the security forces. *(Everytime the call is interrupted she says farewell and intensified shooting and more slogans can be heard.)* I've been wounded in the arm. The bullets went right through. They want to blow up the bathroom wall with bombs. *(The sound of a bomb explosion; slogans)* They weren't able to break down the wall. We will barricade the wall again. *(The sounds of furniture being moved around can be heard.)* They knew that I was here. They say they have killed Sinan. They are talking about the Ikizler apartment. "Uncle" is there. Listen to the reports. Give me the news. I am sitting and thinking how I can help my comrades. I don't know how this happened. Nothing was wrong this morning. It must have been afterwards. Yes, it must have happened tonight. *(The person on the other end tells her that contact has been made with the press, and that there were two other raids. At one house, three persons were killed, including Sinan, and one person was killed at the other house.)*

Sabo: We are very calm and we feel good. We shall resist until our last drop of blood has fallen. *(She shouts at the police.)*

Eda's voice: Come with your tanks and guns, you cowards. *(Again the police swear at them.)* Sewer rats! You only think with your dicks! *(Intensive shooting)*

Sabo: Like our comrades on the 12th of July and in the mountains near Malatya have welcomed death, we are also going to welcome death like Hamiyet and Olcay... I want to turn to my comrades... *(Intensive shooting and more slogans.)* Long live Devrimci Sol! Long live our July 12th resistance! Long live Kizildere! Long live Dursun Karatas! Long live our resistance! Down with fascism! Long live Devrimci Sol! Long live our Göztepe resistance!

06.45

(They don't come on the line very often. To get to the phone, they must crawl along the floor. Sabo has been wounded in the leg. After about an hour, they address the people on the street. The voices are too faint to be understood.)

Sabo: They are going to blow out the door with explosives. We can't get to the phone because it's by the door. After this, we are going to the rear of the room. They are coming in.

(The last words...)

Sabo: We greet death with weapons in our hands and with slogans on our lips. Especially send greetings to my partner, my leader, the leader of Devrimci Sol. Greetings to all comrades. Farewell! *(Many shots are heard; the bodies of the comrades can be heard falling to the ground.)*

07.15

(The sound of shooting is so loud, it sounds as if hundreds of people are firing; the phone makes a strange noise; no voices are heard, only gun shots.)

07.25

(The phone line goes dead)

- (1) Niyazi, Apo, and Haydar; died during a hunger-strike in 1984.
- (2) July 12: Massacre in 1991, during which 12 Dev Sol militants were killed, including Hiyazi.
- (3) Kizildere; village where the leading cadre of the THKP/C, a predecessor of Devrimci Sol, were killed.

...Falcon interview continued from page 10

countries before that, do you hope that Ofensiva '92 will act in the same way as the campaign to free the 4 Puerto Rican prisoners a few years ago who had been in prison for 20 years or more?

I would say that at the moment in the liberal sectors and radical sectors of Puerto Rico society on the island there is no unifying theme. We are hoping that the campaign for the liberation of the political prisoners will be the unifying trend amongst all the radical and progressive sectors of Puerto Rican society. And that even the moderates, due to the human rights issues included in it, will finally give the support to this campaign for freedom in view of the fact that the political prisoners and Prisoners of War, the only reason that they are in jail is that they are anti-colonial combatants and very clearly under international law anti-colonial combatants are not to be persecuted by the colonial power, but would either be judged by an international body, or should be allowed to receive asylum in a neutral country. In the same way, these international institutes forbid the oppressor country to criminalize the anti-colonial combatants and the U.S. has always violated what is very clearly stated by the international institutes.

This interview took place March 1992 on CKLN, a progressive radio station in Toronto, Canada.

...Greek Militants Arrested continued from page 8
this way! That makes us dangerous to them, but it has nothing to do with these charges. The people arrested with me are my personal friends, and they have been detained so that our number might constitute a "group". Oppose the "anti-terror" program which foreign capital is financing and which our government is directing against the people and all of Greek society! In the face of lies, truth will prevail! I will make a more lengthy statement sometime in the future."



- (4) Malatya; place where five members of Dev Sol were killed in early 1992
- (5) TAYAD; an organization of the relatives of political prisoners, declared an illegal organization in 1991.
- (6) Sinan; a leader of Dev Sol, also killed on April 17.
- (7) Hamiyet and Olcay; members of Dev Sol, killed in Izmir.
- (8) Manukyan; famous prostitute in Turkey who pays high taxes.
- (9) Göztepe; neighborhood in Istanbul where the apartment was located.

...Statement to the Tribunal continued from page 9

We are confronted very directly with the results of this terroristic policy against the poor and against those who are pressed into a status as refugees. In Europe and especially in Germany now we can see once more an escalation in racism that is stimulated by the state but spreading also inside great parts of society. Europe is building up to be a fortress to keep the wealth for a small elite and to keep the standard of living for a decreasing number of the metropolitan society.

However, this violent attempt to find a way out of the capitalistic world-wide crisis will not be successful, because this system isn't able to give any future for the human race and a chance for the survival of the earth neither in the imperialistic states nor in the plundered and dependent nations.

The future is in our hands; the oppressed people, the people who are denied any voice in the world-development. We are the ones who will formulate our aims and our own conception for the worldwide social development, for our own life and future generations.

This tribunal is one step on the way forward.

Freedom now for all political prisoners and all prisoners of war worldwide!

Prisoners from the guerrilla & resistance in Germany

September 21, 1992

The three prisoners are being very heavily guarded. Friends and relatives of the arrested militants have been putting pressure on the state prosecutor demanding their release. Shortly before the arrests, November 17 became active again, bombing Athens' financial district in response to tax increases announced by the conservative government.

(From Interim #220)

Red Army Fraction Dossier

With the *communiqué* of April 10, 1992, (see ATS #12) the Red Army Fraction has opened a new phase in its history. In short, they announced a ceasefire, on their part, and decided that they needed to find a new political orientation. In their words: "We had severely limited our politics to attacks on the strategists of imperialism and had failed to search for immediate positive goals and for how a social alternative could begin and exist here and now."

However, the immediate goal of the RAF has been the release of sick and injured political prisoners and the regroupment of all others until their release. In the early part of 1992, Justice Minister Kinkel (now Foreign Minister) proposed the release of some RAF members who were physically unfit for detention and sentence of prisoners who had served 2/3 of their or had served 15 years of a life sentence. Recently released have been Günter Sonnenberg and Claudia Wannersdorfer, two of the sick/injured prisoners, whose release has been repeatedly called for by the RAF and the legal resistance. Also released recently have been Christa Eckes and Luitgard Hornstein. Nonetheless 3 sick/injured political prisoners still remain in prison - Isabel Jacob, Ali Janssen, and Bernd Röbner. At this time the main campaign is around Bernd's situation, as his health has badly deteriorated after 17 years of isolation torture. The Kinkel initiative is an attempt by the state to show that it is flexible and "humane", and treats the RAF prisoners like any others.

This of course is a farce, as at the same time the state is pursuing new trials against imprisoned members of the RAF, based on testimony by collaborating ex-members of the RAF who were captured in the ex-GDR. Sieglinde Hofmann, Ingrid Jakobsmeir, Rolf Clemens Wagner and Christian Klar are all facing trials based on the evidence given by the ex-RAF militants who are trying to reduce their own prison sentences. (This strategy by the RAF traitors has failed, and in some cases has led to longer sentences than what the prosecution demanded.) The first of these trials began in September against Christian Klar and we have reprinted his statement to the court on this page.

It is unclear whether the release of Sonnenberg and Wannersdorfer was the result of the Kinkel initiative or the RAF ceasefire declaration. What is clear is that the state is still pursuing its policy of repression and persecution against the prisoners of the RAF and the resistance.

In this issue we are reprinting the first part of a long statement by the RAF from August 1992 in which they attempt to analyze and explain their past actions and political direction, particularly their concept of building of an anti-imperialist front in the metropolises with the guerrilla at its centre. This statement, along with their statement of April 10/92 and their July/92 statement to anti-G7 counter congress in Munich has provoked an intense discussion and debate amongst the European revolutionary movements. A number of political prison-

ers in Europe, including those from Action Directe in France and the CCC in Belgium, have released statements critical of the ceasefire decision of the RAF. As well, the Central Committee of the PCE (r) - Communist Party of Spain (reconstituted) - released a *communiqué* critical of the RAF decision. The PCE (r), whose military wing is GRAPO (First of October, Anti-Fascist Resistance Groups), has long been critical of the RAF's anti-imperialist strategy, and they themselves propagate armed struggle based within class opposition. Within Germany there has been ongoing discussion amongst various parts of the radical-left movement as well as with the political prisoners. The interview with 3 RAF prisoners which we have included in this issue concerns itself primarily with the April 10 declaration and the broader issues which it addresses.

We have copies of many of the discussion papers and statements mentioned above as well as others not mentioned here. As well we have *communiqués* from the Revolutionary Cells and subsequent responses concerning their own discussion surrounding the role of armed struggle. We would like to publish all of these together in one collection but at the present time our weak financial situation does not allow us to do so. Those comrades who wish to read the various statements and papers can send us money for copies. More importantly we ask for financial support so that we can publish a booklet containing as many of these as possible.

Christian Klar's Trial Statement - Stammheim Process

Christian Klar - RAF prisoner, imprisoned since 1982 - and Peter-Jürgen Boock - (renouncing) RAF prisoner, imprisoned since 1981 - are both accused of an action to obtain money in Zürich (Switzerland) in 1979. During this action one passer-by was killed and a car-owner was seriously injured. Peter-Jürgen Boock accuses Christian Klar of the shootings.

In early '92 the "Koordinationsgruppe für Terror" which coordinates all intelligence services and institutions of repression in Wiesbaden (it links all the forces which had to be kept separate from each other since the Gestapo) came out with a thing called "the new attitude towards the question of political prisoners". Ever since the former Minister of Justice (Kinkel) presented this to the public, it is called "Kinkel-Initiative". And optimism arose about the situation of political prisoners and more generally: The expectation that the criminalization and suppression of the Left and the radical movements in this country would be retracted. Eight months have passed in the meantime. I can't go into specific questions here. Those who don't make daily immediate experiences, are at least reading newspapers and watching TV-pictures.

But briefly about the area of jails and trials. The planning of this trial and the following ones is a crucial point. The situation of the political prisoners is the same as it ever was. The refusal of regroupment and the handling of releases (refusing to release even dangerously ill prisoners) is not a new attitude. It is rather a new ambitious calculation with hostages that has developed over the past few months. The rhythm they started now gives them hostages material for the next 10 years.

Does this mean (self)discipline of militant politics over the next 10 years in Germany? Another initiative has become fat at the same time. A "Kinkel-Initiative" again (Kinkel became Foreign Minister in the meantime). But a real one this time. Remaining obstacles were removed

in persistent steps to bring the German military forces in a starting position for the coming bloody race among the imperialist powers for a new distribution of global areas of influence. Of course, there is a relationship between these two things. They want to chain the one organization which has gained the most internationalist aura and moral respect in Germany over the past 22 years to the issue of political prisoners in order to pave the way for their rise to world power and to new domination and devastation of European and non-European peoples.

But the western tendency to global policing, the politics of devastation to force more space for a greater position of power and new booms for the lords of the world market and the fact that since Rostock's pogroms racism has been declared the official state ideology, these developments are bringing me to the view that the newly emerging Left in this country should develop and create its strategy without being impressed by the state's threat of having political prisoners in its hand.

About the trial here: it is to build upon the done deals with the state witnesses. The judicial meaning is: the state security's justice system is coming to its old essence again. Everything that makes it run as an instrument to eliminate revolutionary opposition is useful, is right. But there is a more important point. This is the model of western-media-factory, which was used in 1991 to force a consensus by projection of a sham reality into the living rooms of the metropolitan population until the consensus was ready for Gulf-intervention. It is the same technique of power in presenting the so-called state's witnesses. The few criminalistic informations are secondary. The main thing is staging a sham reality for the politics of the state - to appropriate history, so it can not be acquired from below for our future. The apparatus is getting fat from the collaborator. But he can not give anything authentic about his history. He is vanished in the stress of inner defense, of reinsurance and fulfilling of his

own contribution to the bargains's reward.

At last about the money action in Zürich. There would be no need to talk about it if there hadn't been victims among non-participants.

As a matter of principle it's justified to get money out of the capital's safes for the needs of revolutionary movements. So the money is taken out of the circle of exploitation and slavery and brought to just goals.

We are talking about the action to obtain money in downtown Zürich in 1979. The origin of the problems was that the escape from the bank was not prepared well enough. Add a toss-up to the situation, and you get the conditions where an "active" citizen feels empowered to assist the police. Such people guided mobilized police to the RAF-group. Until that nobody was hurt. But two policemen caused the shootings at two different places and in this context one passer-by was killed and a second woman was seriously hurt. But it was different than the monstrous claims of the indictment. There was no intentional shooting from the RAF-group against the lives of civilians and not against the two women in the situation of escape. Based on the available facts it is not certain if the death of the passer-by or the injuring of the car owner was caused by police bullets or by weapons of the RAF-group. Reconstructing the situation later, there were just probabilities concluded from positions of people and directions of fire. But this is not to obscure responsibility. This responsibility exists, because it was our own action. Specifically, when it became impossible to avoid exchanging fire with the police, the guns were used without the necessary carefulness, even with some bad ruthlessness, which must not happen under such circumstances. It is part of the principle of responsibility: if you can not avoid the use of firearms you have to do it in a way that excludes endangering non-participants.

These are essential principles of the revolutionary
continued on page 35...

"They Want To Destroy Us"

Interview With RAF Prisoners; Lutz Taufer, Karl-Heinz Dellwo, Knut Folkerts



(L-R) Thomas Ebermann, Lutz Taufer, Hermann Gremliza, Knut Folkerts, Rosita Timm and Karl-Heinz Dellwo

Interview from *Konkret* (monthly magazine for left theory, discussion and culture), June 1992. The participants in this talk are: Karl-Heinz Dellwo, Knut Folkerts and Lutz Taufer, captured members of the RAF - prisoners since 1975 (Knut Folkerts since 1977), Rosita Timm, member of the Green Party in Hamburg and involved in the movement to free the political prisoners, Thomas Ebermann, former member of the Green Party, and Hermann L. Gremliza, publisher of *Konkret*.

Gremliza: "If it is true that American imperialism is a paper tiger, i.e. that it can be defeated in the end; and if the Chinese communists are correct that the victory against American imperialism has become possible because the struggle is being waged all over the globe and imperialism's strengths have been spread thin and have splintered, which makes imperialism surmountable - if all this is true, then there is no reason to exclude any particular country or region from the anti-imperialist struggle because the reactionary forces happen to be especially strong in that country. As wrong as it is to discourage the forces of revolution by under-estimating them, it is equally wrong to suggest points of confrontation to them where they can only be destroyed and used as cannon-fodder."

This was a quote from the April 1971 RAF-document "The Urban Guerilla Concept". Exactly 21 years later, the most recent RAF-declaration which we want to discuss here, draws the conclusions from the founding document: because imperialism turned out not to be a paper tiger, but to be invincible, the proposal is made not to waste any more energies in a hopeless struggle. Is this the meaning of the declaration?

Taufer: The world of the 1970's is different than the world of the 1990's. 20 years ago we were thinking, living and fighting as a part of the world-wide uprising against U.S. imperialist hegemony. The world was divided into two parts. The Soviet Union forced imperialism into a global balance of power that limited imperialism's options against the peoples and liberation movements in the Third World. There was at least one

liberation movement in armed struggle in each country of Latin America for example. Successful, victorious liberation organizations were in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Especially in Vietnam there was a people of peasants in pajamas and tire sandals pushing the world's most powerful military machine against the wall. And then there were the revolts in the metropolises. As we know today, the movements against the Vietnam War - especially in the U.S. - contributed to a large extent to the fact that Nixon and Kissinger considered the war lost as early as 1969.

The wide-spread sense of the global situation being at a point of decision was marked by West German politicians referring to a spreading "lack of confidence in the state", by a Trilateral Commission investigation titled "Crisis of Democracy" - while a fresh wind of grass-roots democracy was ventilating through the metropolises. And former chancellor Willy Brandt was talking about the freedom of West-Berlin being defended in Vietnam.

Our assessment in those days was: strategically, imperialism is put on the defensive. There had been growing forces against the U.S. dominated imperialist world system simultaneously all over the world. And with the background of Auschwitz and Vietnam it was worth to think about (morally and politically) joining the uprising with the attempt of armed struggle in the centers of imperialism. The ambivalent position of the political, economic, judiciary and military elite on the fascist past and their clear support for the genocide in Vietnam, left the question unanswered whether or not fascism in Germany could reappear. To some extent, armed struggle in the FRG was an attempt to make up for [the previous lack of anti-fascist] resistance.

To expect an approaching breakdown of the US-imperialist system turned out to be a mistake. Today we live in a completely different world. By creating "two, three, many Vietnams", the goal in the 1960's and 1970's was to take away the sources of exploitation and enrichment from the Western system. Supported by this, the Non-Aligned Movement demanded a New Global Economic Order. Today the situation is reversed: it is imperialism which is discarding entire peoples like squeezed

lemons. Their cheap resources and labor power is no longer needed, and therefore they have lost their right to exist.

The world is no longer polarized between the Third World and the metropolises. There are two worlds now: the world of the haves and the world of the have-nots. These two worlds exist within the FRG, within the U.S., in Brazil, Chile, Egypt, India, Nigeria. They are everywhere. Today in the U.S., the demand for a new world order and the un-focused uprising are only separated by a few blocks. After the marines had gone into Grenada and Panama, they now go into Los Angeles. The marginalized, that is the vast majority of all humankind, find themselves in the situation of Robinson Crusoe. The washed-up of imperialism and of the world market are forced to depend on what they find in themselves and in their immediate environment, when they organize their lives and their social world.

The coming era will be the era of the social movements, of economic and social inventions. Suppose we are successful in opening the necessary space to give concrete utopian schemes some global meaning. The alternative would be spreading, scattered violence and destruction from those and against those who fight for their survival. And the RAF's answer to the "question of violence" would be one of no importance - facing this increasing gravity of the situation.

The RAF's declaration is talking about this changed world situation. It's not a surrender, it's a principled new orientation towards a situation. Armed struggle goes against the grain of this new situation.

Gremliza: Do you want to add anything to this declaration or do you have any criticism?

Dellwo: I think this declaration is right. Its heart is that we have reached certain boundaries on the one hand and we shouldn't give up on the other hand. I wouldn't criticize what others find out for themselves and how they express that.

The RAF has reached a limit, a boundary. Everybody has a sense that a lot of work has been done over the last twenty years, but that we're walking on one spot now. The RAF during its founding period, the concept of a metropolitan guerilla - that meant: putting the question of power on the table. And breaking open our position of powerlessness, in which we found ourselves again and again in our specific struggles against the policies of the ruling class. We wanted to create a space for the Left, the space of illegality in which you are able to create yourself as a subject. As a political subject in a position of attack. The state and the politics of the ruling class, the question of the system itself - that was a taboo. Those at the bottom have to be subordinated - that idea, too, had to be attacked. It's the logic of power to keep people down. We were shooting back. We reversed the relationship they had to the bottom of society, and turned it against them.

Today, something else is missing. It's not limited by the power of the state. There is a lack of new social ideas, something like a new historical social sense for society. I know that is has something to do with the self-validity of human beings and of nature, which we have to win back. But the first boundary today is the alienation in society.

Of course, we also had in mind an expropriation or socialization of the means of production. This is one goal and we can do a lot with it. But it remained vague. It was more this: you couldn't live here - not in this capital-dominated present period. And you didn't want to watch the worldwide crimes - not with that history. You were already made for this system before you even woke up. At first you have to get up and hold your own against that.

Our orientation didn't fall apart with the collapse of state socialism (real-existing socialism). Its structure of society was not one of our aims. But it was the existing

counter-system to capitalism. And another idea about society as a whole has not been born yet. We always said that we don't have a history, we are starting at point zero. Today I think, this was even more true than we understood at the time. Now there is no centralized perspective any more and perhaps there will never be a centralized perspective again - but this doesn't have to be a loss. The old perspective remained external to human beings. It was not helpful to watch the world and life in a new way. We have to find something new in the concrete questions. This concrete question is the same as the everyday aspect of society. We have to bring the moment of transformation to this everyday life. It's the only way to create a new view for society as a whole. I want to create a break with the whole system in this everyday life. We have to search for that.

Gremliza: When I compare the situation of 1970/71 to today I see only one significant change: state socialism doesn't exist anymore and along with this: most of the movements which had a sort of rear cover from it don't exist anymore, either.

Taufert: The question is: is this a positive or a negative change. This kind of rear cover was always an ambiguous affair, as early as during the Vietnam War. It maintained a certain mentality of centralized perspective. In today's discussions we learn from the Tupamaros, that this collapse of state socialism had a liberating aspect for the Left, for the political movements. They have to rely upon themselves and are working on developing an emancipatory perspective out of their own concrete conditions and their own history. That's what the Left has to do here, too.

Gremliza: When I look at the Left and especially at the parts of the Left that always had the sharpest criticism of state socialism, I don't see anyone taking a free deep breath and searching for new, liberating perspectives. I see a final farewell from any resistance and a joining of the victorious fatherland.

Taufert: This love of fatherland, which many are discovering now originates in the liquidation of the spirit of fundamental opposition against capitalism in 1968. This spirit has been liquidated by the myth of the definitive democracy, that was supposedly effected by the 1968 movement. The discussion now begun by the RAF also gives the chance for evaluating the past 25 years in a new way.

Ebermann: Reading the declaration of the RAF, my sense was: It draws a good conclusion but it is partly based on very bad reasoning. It seems to me as if there is not enough admission of the depth of defeat.

Dellwo: And what if we don't have the feeling of defeat?

Ebermann: It's a political disagreement then. If one is not a cynical person, there is the hope to be less correct in the end compared to the person who painted the situation in extremely dark colors.

Folkerts: Victory and defeat are really relative terms. We had to get along with defeats and losses. We went through extremely tough situations inside and outside of prison. But even now, being confronted with a very difficult situation of transition, we are never talking about 'being defeated'. We accumulated a lot during those years and we'd like to socialize that, connect it with other experiences. For this we want communication with many. With the Left - and what's left of it, and with all the forces, that are newly emerging from the contradictions now. During this long confrontation we gained experiences, got a consciousness about our power. Even if we can't show weighty victories (perhaps they are plain and not spec-

tacular) we certainly gained something by fighting.

Dellwo: Neither do I think we are coming from defeat. We are imprisoned for 17 years now, Knut for 15 years. And this is our experience of all that time: they want to silence us. But they didn't succeed. Quite the contrary. We have that feeling that we made it. We went through all this. As the RAF we have reached a boundary. And I am asking myself, did we achieve anything or didn't we? Did we set something historically new, which is what we wanted? What about the experiences that didn't exist before we made them?

Taufert: It has become a bit fashionable among the Left to chat about all kinds of defeat. Personally, I never understood that - from prison. If there ever was a strong Left in Western Europe after 1966, it was in the FRG, beginning with the first sit-in at the university in Berlin up to the last action of the RAF. Where else in Western Europe did there exist a Left with such a potential of regeneration? I am all for a thorough search for mistakes and weaknesses over the past 25 years. Our search will depend on whether we start this work with a fundamental historical pessimism or with trust and confidence. The Left has reached a limit, and has fallen into a deep crisis, in the FRG and worldwide. This is a unique chance to learn everything from the past we never thought we would have to.

A lot of experiences have been accumulated, including by us. We have been in this totalitarian situation, ten years in maximum security. It was like a miniature 'Third Reich'. And, although they scanned every expression of life with video-cameras, microphones, brainwashing-programs, everything you can imagine, they didn't defeat us. There are experiences you can only accumulate in maximum security units, at least in the northern hemisphere. And that's what we did. We know a lot about this question of defeat and victory. This knowledge is now needed outside of prison.

Ebermann: O.K. You can say that: It's only then a defeat when they break us, when they take away our political thinking, our fundamental opposition. If this is the understanding of defeat - then neither are you defeated nor am I. It's not at that point now and I hope it never will be.

But there is a second sense of defeat. When every experience is buried, no future rebel will be able to learn from it. A lot of people act like that, when they fail in their concrete goals. There is also a disgusting sort of criticism towards state socialism. Everybody is rushing to say: I didn't agree with it anyway. I wrote a lot of criticism

towards state socialism. But I always hoped that the GDR [East Germany] can survive against the FRG [West Germany]. I always hoped that certain projects (e.g. the plans to kill the East and spare the West at the same time) will fail. I did hope that this arming to death and economic penetration of the east will not work. When I eliminate all this now and say: this was no socialism at all, where did they have real emancipation, wasn't alienation the same or didn't they have the same commodity relations - then I'm going to destroy the subject I could be able to learn from.

I don't mean this second term of defeat. When I'm talking about defeat - I'm talking about a balance of power within society. They didn't break you and they didn't break me. And I'm not talking about a time we all were doing shit. But this balance of power brings us in such a deserted and lonely position unlike anything I've ever experienced.

Dellwo: Do you claim that this system is more stable than it was 20 years ago?

Ebermann: Yes, that's what I think. And I refuse to say that our hopes were pure craziness that, with our help, an encircling of the metropolises might be successful. I try to keep our biography and history in sight, try to keep in everybody's mind that it once was an open question - an open question for years - which forces will succeed in the world. We didn't yell this slogan "Create two, three, many Vietnams" because we were crazy. At that time, it was a real possibility.

There is this horrible re-writing of history now: We all were dreamers, idiots, and if we had been realistic, we would have anticipated the victories of imperialism. It's a history for couch-potatoes, still happy, that they didn't pick up one stone 20 years ago.

But today, with certain views we are beyond the parameters of legitimate debate. For me, it was always like that: If there was a controversial debate in society there was always a certain range of views. We were an extreme wing but always in touch with a pool of left reformists. In contact with one or another progressive member of parliament or an interested radio or TV moderator. Today there are a lot of discussions about the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, about the public debt, about what should happen with the former GDR. And suddenly we have no voice in this discussion.

Folkerts: This is just a sign that the Left's frame of reference has fallen apart. The East-West line of demar-



cation, the struggles against colonialism, the metropolitan movements and the relations between these struggles including their realistic revolutionary possibilities - this historical period (beginning with the October Revolution in 1917) has ended. This fact demands that a break be made. A new combination of emancipatory forces can not and will not drive in old lanes.

New social space, situations, relations - national and international - will be created. The lonely position you are talking about - we don't make ourselves dependent on that. In times of illegality we learned to swim against the stream. What we learned from the loneliness of isolation is to hold up against a superior force. These experiences are the origins of our basic confidence. A basic confidence in ourselves and the potential abilities of human beings.

Taufers: If there is a weakness of the Left at the time, it has a lot to do with its inability to create a credible utopian scheme.

Ebermann: No, you are wrong! There is no lack of utopian schemes. There is just nobody listening to them. Take this critique of productivity. It was a wide-spread phenomenon some years ago. Both good and bad sides in it. The idealization of alternative firms and companies, the romanticizing of former crafts, the absurd self-exploitation - in spite of that there was a discussion about productivity, the chaining of human beings to industrial work, the humiliation of human beings by machines and assembly lines. There was a discussion about the question of fighting this kind of production.

Something like 5 or 10 percent of this society dreamt of somehow organizing life in a better way. This is the origin of each utopian scheme. And this has disappeared. The desire to overcome alienation is not very present in this society. You have to admit, they momentarily won ideologically, they were able to plant into people's minds that this is the best of all worlds imaginable.

Folkerts: This is because you look at the present time in old patterns. You have to learn to watch exactly how contradictions are expressed in a new way, where they are articulated in a new way. Of course they need a Left. And this becomes a circle: the Left doesn't exist and everything is dominated by reactionary forces.

Timm: The main contradiction between Thomas [Ebermann] and you all is the assessment of imperialism's stability. And my impression is, that Thomas is mainly looking at the economic side. The economic stability and expansion, the economic opportunities which have opened up and play an important role in the countries of former state socialism. But remembering Vietnam and what took place there: the economic and military power of the U.S. against a people who had little more than their own idea, their own will to be independent. And this couldn't be broken by economic and military power.

Today we see this economic power on the one hand. On the other hand we see bourgeois, humanist ideas and ideals thrown out. Nobody, including the ruling class, keeps them. If they would be starting with slogans like: "Let's dare more democracy" [1969 election campaign slogan] or something like that, everybody would laugh - it would be so ridiculous. Today it is difficult to determine: which point we are starting from, under which conditions? How can you analyze something when you keep staring at the media? If everything that is really moving does not get published, it will remain within small circles - like in the St. Georg neighborhood in Hamburg, where a social initiative, a neighborhood association, the Gray Panthers, the children's schools and some others came together because of the drug policy made by the Hamburg government. This is not the ideol-

logical direction of "Free distribution of Heroin". They say with a great sense for practical decisions: "What the police is doing here in St. Georg is to our disadvantage. When the junkies are banished from the public space of the main train station they come to the entrances and backyards of our houses. This is why the needles are laying around here. So they come together and demand: "Police out of this community". This is something concrete you can start with today.

Ebermann: They are probably doing useful things there. But you can't talk about politics and society this way.

Timm: Why not?

Ebermann: I'm giving another example. The state government of Schleswig Holstein crowded all the refugees in front of the welfare offices - to document the so-called abuse. And there was a demonstration against this. Less than 200 people were at this demonstration. But the basis for the current hegemony of the ruling class is that they have been successful in establishing ideologically that the world is fucked up, and that it is "everyone for her/himself". This is reflected in the total lack of opposition against the racism that is directed at the refugees.

Taufers: That's what I think, more or less. But often in history, when forces of solidarity and freedom have been kept down and the power was in position of hegemony, counter forces emerged from below. You can see that clearly in the United States. The ruling class has no solution anymore for a practicable civil society. This is not only an issue for Blacks in the ghettos. This is also an issue for the middle class, although it is moving to the right at the time. But the question is: how can we develop these forces. That includes an examination of the past 25 years history to learn from the mistakes and strengths.

Dellwo: Thomas [Ebermann] thinks that this system has become more stable over the past 20 years. I don't see that. We had to go through a certain process and had to walk certain wrong streets. And we walked many wrong streets. We're not going to repeat that but they had to be walked. All this, our lack of ideas, the momentary vacuum because we have no answer to the question of centralized perspective, that state socialism has failed as the first break with history (and we don't know how to start again) - all this doesn't mean the system has become more stable.

We can list a lot of reasons why we see the system as weaker, less stable than before. But that doesn't help. Because the weakness of the other side doesn't mean our power. There is no automatic relationship between misery and liberation.

Vice versa, if the system was stable, this wouldn't be the origin of our weakness. But I can not think like that. Whether it is more stable or not - everybody who doesn't give up life in this society has to break away from that consensus and has to develop their own good sense, has to live and fight that it will come to existence as a developing subversive reality. This way I understand the declaration of our comrades.

We are coming to this situation from a different history. We accepted our isolation in those days as an initial condition. It was hard sometimes but we didn't lose ourselves. That means: we always came to a break with this system in a material way. Others had a lot of fear towards this isolation, but today they find themselves in that isolation, against their own will. It's wrong to declare it's all about the power of the system rather than criticizing yourself that you always kept surrendering, too. So many people maintained that breaking with the system has to be something real in your life. And if it's right it becomes insignificant if you're alone with it. And it comes back to us as a pre-condition for any further



development.

It should be easier today because the question of competence has become more clear now. How much confidence do people put in the capability of capitalism to solve the existential problems of life? And isn't that a sign that this system is politically less stable?

Taufers: Except if one defines this stability as follows: all this brutality, egoism, unrestrained greed are mechanisms to keep and develop this scheme of society. Then one can speak of stability. But this egoism and brutality are immensely destructive against any scheme of society.

Ebermann: Maybe I can explain my thoughts by reading a part of the RAF's declaration. "It is an important question for how much longer the state will be able to feed into the racism against refugees and to treat the refugees as sub-human in order to avoid its responsibility for unemployment, lack of housing, poverty among the elderly, etc. - and how much longer the state will be able to send these people back into the misery that it keeps contributing to in the first place."

This is cruel. We are living in times when almost everything from us that was able to take root in society - the demand for "open borders," e.g., sounded good to liberal church circles - is replaced by a consensus to deal with refugees hard and ruthlessly. There is no relevant resistance against this any more. Now I am comparing this with the part of the declaration that suggests that the future remains a somewhat open question and perhaps even suggests that the ceasing of armed actions is related to this. It seems to me that the authors still need to claim that they just won grand victories and are therefore able to take such and such specific steps.

This is even more clear at another point where it says: "...there are factions within the ruling apparatus that have realized they can't suppress resistance and social contradictions through police-military means." First, all factions within the state have always known not to use these means in a pure fashion. And second, there will be one element structuring politics in future, which is repression. Both quotes seem to be in a relation. It sounds like: "Because everything is going well, we can change the form of struggle."

Dellwo: My understanding is different. There were times when a guerilla came into being here. And it's not possible to eliminate this from history - even if they would quit. And it can come into being again at any time. That's

what they want to say. What the RAF meant to me is: to break out of a certain relation of extermination by the state towards minorities and opposition. We know what they did to the KPD after 1945 [The German Communist Party KPD was banned in 1956, followed by 150,000 political trials against its members and other progressives] and we know how the state responded in 1968. And I know how they cleared our squatted house in Hamburg with special forces and with machine guns - and they were ready to shoot us. We set something against that until today. They couldn't destroy the RAF. They couldn't break the prisoners in jail.

And we fought for the ability to practice a certain kind of resistance when it is necessary. That remained limited to us who were living underground or in prison, and to a few people around that. And I'd like to disseminate and to broaden this attitude, the willingness to stand up for something. I'm not talking about the form of our struggle, which has to be determined anew. I am talking about the willingness to assert something, and to carry through with it - a willingness to determine a question from our point of view and to demand an answer.

It was not the attitude of most in the Left. They always stopped and surrendered at certain boundaries. And this is one of the subjects in the RAF declaration: You should fight for the ability to resist. This noon I thought, look, both of you have been part of the Left for much longer than I have. And you have never been in jail. Why is that? Why didn't you carry through with a certain thing, paid a price too? There is something missing in this Left. We have to reach that point, I suppose.

Gremliza: Make the Left go to prison?

Dellwo: Not make the Left go to prison. But we have to reach the point where we insist on certain things. When we fought for engroupment we reached that boundary, we had dead prisoners, too. But we knew we had to pay this price, otherwise you won't be able to survive. You have to fight. You are here in this maximum security unit and you realize that the whole thing is going to wipe you out - wipe you out as a human being. You know this would be a defeat, you have to set something against it, your self-affirmation. Then you can carry through. And if you say that so much has disappeared, then one of the reasons might be that you never insisted: "We refuse to have this taken away from us." A little bit of self-criticism won't hurt you.

Timm: If the subject is discussion and a new orientation now, it must be possible to criticize certain things with this RAF declaration. There is a mistake, an imprecise political assessment. The RAF is talking about the change in the balance of power and they are basing this on Kinkel's remarks about the political prisoners [in early 1992, suggesting that some political prisoners could be released under certain conditions. Kinkel used to be Minister of the Interior and Law Enforcement. He has since become Foreign Minister]. They take the fact that he is saying anything as proof for the existence of certain factions within the state, factions that are willing to handle contradictions in a different way, for example regarding the question of foreigners and asylum. But this is one of the areas where we haven't achieved anything. There is no indication for a decline in repression, but only for an intensification.

Dellwo: But you agree, that ten years ago they never would have been doing the things Kinkel is doing today?

Timm: There's some moving in the question of political prisoners. But we don't know the reasons why.

Folkerts: There is a misunderstanding. The RAF is not taking the state policies against immigrants as an ex-

ample to suppose the existence of factions within the apparatus handling the contradictions in a different way. The subject matter of their declaration is starting from the opposite and is referring to the necessity of social struggles. These struggles will settle the questions of winning space for all the essential questions politically. In these struggles we'll learn to demolish the ruling consensus.

And in the question of political prisoners: there are factions within the institutions. But we are not overestimating them. Those who are searching for new ways still have the same aims. However, Kinkel's remarks are a political expression of these contradictions that have matured for a long time. This is especially remarkable because it's an apparatus with a very strong ability to persist. We are talking about the complex of state security with its fascist roots and its relative autonomy which is - together with the media - a machine of self-legitimation. Although it has long been obvious from the facts that they are unable to break the RAF or the prisoners this way, they have been going on and on for years. The psychological campaigns, the lies and the frauds were meant to prevent the political consequences of a situation without a way out. The invention of "successful searches for fugitives" (like the "absolutely credible witness of the prosecution" in early 1992) is to simulate the capability to vanquish the RAF - in a moment when one of the RAF's heart has supposedly deserted to the state. After 22 years, they are revealing their true essence: the reality pretended by BAW (Federal Prosecutor), BKA (Federal Police), VS (Domestic Political Intelligence) and the media is identical to the fancy world of a mentally ill person.

Taufer: I think, it's important to emphasize that the RAF's declaration is not a reaction to Kinkel but the first result of an ongoing discussion which started 2 years ago. This discussion was a result of the tremendous changes in the world which called for a new determination.

Gremliza: But one can hardly deny that the effect of this declaration is going into a direction that you consider to be a misunderstanding. The RAF responds to Kinkel's demands and hoists the white flag to get the prisoners out. You can say: the public got the wrong picture and Kinkel got the wrong picture. But for me it's hard to believe that the authors of this declaration didn't anticipate this effect and therefore didn't want it.

Folkerts: Perhaps the sequence of events gives you that impression. But it's a necessary and right decision within the whole development. How people will work with this decision in the future will depend on how the Left will intervene into the situation in order to prevent a defeatist tendency. Of course, it's an open situation - which the other side knows. They, of course, want everything for themselves and nothing for us.

Ebermann: The whole movie is directed towards two different audiences.

Folkerts: The declaration is directed to society, to everyone who is searching for ways to assert a life worthy of human beings. It's the same with the declaration from us, the prisoners. Our remarks towards the state are clear. So the state can start from facts and not from illusions and the primitive calculations of its "specialists" - like when they recently announced to release some of the prisoners and to start additional trials against others at the same time.

Ebermann: Everything that is somehow useful to free political prisoners is more than legitimate. It's above any criticism. I think that you defined the boundaries yourself. And if I caught that right there are two boundaries: the first is when you drag other people down and the second is to drag your own history through the mud so

that nobody feels the desire to learn from it. Everything else has to be done. And you got to know that we are not very helpful in pushing your release. This is a decision by the structure of ruling politics, or of the accepted opposition within the frame of that politics. And so they are the correct addressees for that RAF declaration.

The other addressee is the remaining Left. And we really have to watch out that your success which hopefully has become possible now will not get registered as being a part of a "civilizing" and "liberalizing" development. Strong forces are trying to play this music, calling for certain self-criticisms.

And I think those quotes of the declaration which are suggesting things are going well in Germany, are harmful under these aspects. For me, [Marxist economist] Robert Kurz - whom you quote many times - does not so much represent an economic analysis, but for a political assessment that liberalization broke out in Germany: liberalization because assistant judges (or whatever the name of that sort of rabble is) are wearing ear-diamonds, wearing their hair in ponytails. The cosmopolitan is growing up here and a nazi can't be a nazi because he bought his wife in Singapore. Kurz stands for all these smuggled substitutes of ideology.

Dellwo: I disagree. I didn't understand Kurz this way.

Ebermann: Two themes have preoccupied the world for centuries. One: is the world going down with all hands? And the other: is humankind going to civilize? Kurz is the prophet of the latter.

Folkerts: His assertion that capitalism's victory over socialism lasted just one second and that this victory will intensify capitalism's own crisis is much more important. If you don't only watch superficial appearances but the growing potential of global crisis coming back to the centers - accelerated in the FRG by the annexation of the GDR - you can't talk anymore about this system becoming more stabile.

Ebermann: How does one define this stability? Any stupid reformist says that IMF and World Bank have failed. You recognize this by the gap between the stated ideals of these institutions and reality. Somehow all the ideals never become reality. But in reality these institutions are functioning perfectly. Of course, I can say there is no stability because there is no tranquility for them. But they don't need this tranquility. They can leave huge communities in New York without supervision as long as they can be sure that people are killing each other, selling drugs to each other. As long as it's not concerning materials they want to turn into commodities, they don't care.

Folkerts: The idea of emancipation should be grounded anew from deep down and from historical maturity because a whole epoch has ended. Liberation - what does that mean today? Today there is the possibility of suspensions and it never was before. Structural mass-unemployment is the negative expression of the eventual possibility to suspended labour. We do need a real and an obvious moment at the present time because it will be a long lasting process of transition. Liberation can't remain an abstraction or a distant goal. Goals have to start from living reality, as a movement of acquisition.

Ebermann: I read Taufer's letter to the people in Tübingen where he quotes this Tupamaro who talks about the situation when he is coming into the slums and about what it means to be a talking head when people live in extreme misery. For those who don't live in such conditions, who don't have to worry about having a bed when they get sick or about feeding their children the next day - that is: for many in this country emancipation

can only mean a critique of needs.

Gremliza: The view that every improvement of any other human being's situation on earth will lead to a degeneration of their own situation has grown up in the mass consciousness of the FRG. This view is correct. And this is why every glimpse at the misery of the world is avoided. Otherwise there would have to be a support for emancipatory movements. Down with international solidarity! If you want to do something for yourself and your needs you are well advised to join the wealthy German fatherland. This is why I think the chances that you claim to have discovered in guiding the needs of German masses into emancipatory politics are almost pathetic.

Taufer: We were talking about the Left and its history and not about the German masses. The critique of needs is a crucial point within this context. The illusory process which was guided by the Left (and especially the metropolitan left) which is ending now, failed because they didn't give birth to new needs. This is what the Tupamaros are trying now in Uruguay. If you are talking about socialism to people, who are living in slums, who don't have food, who are selling their 12 year old daughters - they feel that you aren't taking them serious.

Gremliza: If one criticizes the need for food towards people who are living in slums, selling their 12 year old daughters just to survive, instead of sending them a freighter full of wheat (in a real socialist manner) one deserves to get punched in the face.

Taufer: It's one of the basic problems within the socialist movement during the last hundred years that it always tried to talk people into an idealist aim. But wherever capitalism offered real-life possibilities to unfold - in the manner of wolves generally - there was a blind spot in state socialism. Critique of needs - we were talking about that in 1968 already. We gave birth to something new in this country. And a friend from Uruguay experienced this as an achievement when he came into contact with it here. He didn't know it from Uruguay.

In 1968 the critique of needs broke either down on a field of moralistic signposts - and I'm saying nothing of the cruelties - or wherever alternatives were tried the whole thing stayed cautious or sometimes naive. Nothing of that imagination and the certain courage one had to learn with us. And so the return to the status quo looked like a realistic compromise. The need for fundamental change is going to arise, wherever you can feel the life in and from another land of needs. And it will taste so well, that the other needs will be looking rather old.

In the examination of state socialism you now often hear the term use-value. Just like the market economy, real-existing socialism was not the suspension of commodity relations and particularly not the suspension of commodity fetishism which makes people passive. A society focused use-values would be a society of prioritizing the self-initiative and self-determination and not the traditional satisfaction of needs. Self-determination - this is not just the different organizing of the individual-subjective expression. Wherever such a new mentality can rise, the needs for consumption will become less

important because a personal and social activity is quite another way to satisfy needs than consumption is. The world is going to be destroyed by these orgies of consumption and economic abscesses. I can't imagine that Kurz's book won't be discussed within the next years.

Dellwo: Hermann, you seem to be impressed by our optimism?

Gremliza: Not impressed, but devastated. This is not optimism. We are talking about different worlds.

Dellwo: I don't think that any positive development can still be expected from this state. Even if they wanted it - it's materially impossible. But the subject is also the self-affirmation of human beings. You are talking a lot about the Left. And that means the political Left which emerged from the movement of 1968. But the contradiction now reaches far beyond that. Would you call the people in the Hafenstraße/Hamburg leftist? Or the people in the Mainzer Straße/Berlin? I disagree. Maybe the term "leftist" has become useless.

Ebermann: Maybe we are living in times when nothing can be done except for some people trying to preserve emancipatory ideas over the years.

Dellwo: What I caught well in the books of Robert Kurz is the difference between the period of "Fordism" when masses of people were absorbed and nowadays, the period of "Automatization" when masses of people are thrown onto the streets and are declared to be useless. In the former GDR, for example, - there is no use for anybody who is older than 45 years. These people are kept speechless by retraining programs and social programs until they will be too old to resist. Isn't this something, where a lot of things can rise from?

I'm not asking: where is the revolutionary subject? In previous times people were looking for it in the "third world" and after that they were searching among the marginalized parts of society. And I once said: "Look into your mirror. Either you see a revolutionary subject then or you don't." We are being asked: Can we create and develop something where other people can recognize something [they missed?]. Only if we're negating that question, would we be defeated.

Ebermann: When I hear this I am reminded of Poder Popular, people's power: creating a space where the ideological and material influence of the ruling class is limited. And that's why it always comes to the example of the Hafenstraße because this is the most obvious example - and there is always a need to abstract from the real things going on there. They are advertising for the Hafenstraße as Pippi Longstocking.

Dellwo: I don't know about that.

Gremliza: It seems to me as if the Hafenstraße functions as a rather successful model of self-therapy.

Taufer: Isn't this because the process remained superficial there, too? And isn't this related to your pessimism? Of course, I too, see the Left as stagnating. But there was a strong, multi-faceted and very original left process over the past 25 years which was expropriated by the state again and again. After 1945 only the Left proved its talent to create and to push forward with social innovations - today we need such innovations again. Right wing theoreticians like Rohmroser ascertain a much more pessimistic state of the system than people on the Left. But the Left is sitting on its backside and crying about its defeat.

Gremliza: Precondition for everything is a concept of reality - though it might hurt. Defeat is a reality and only

"There Is Much Which Unites Us"

The following speech was delivered by former RAF prisoner Günter Sonnenberg at a demonstration, which included many ex-prisoners, in Bonn on 20.6.92

I have been free since May 15. So I'd like to thank all those people who struggled for my freedom for the 15 years and two weeks that I spent in jail. All of the various initiatives and campaigns which led to my release supported me against the state's plan of destruction during my more than 15 years in prison - and they are also the reason that I'm standing before you today. For all those who struggled, it's important to realize that all those efforts and all that work did achieve results. Thus, every public initiative and every political and militant action was important.

At this time, I'd especially like to thank all of the attorneys and the friends and family group. They have worked tirelessly over the years to publicize my situation and that of all the political prisoners, as well as countering the state's program of destruction. The fact that I'm standing here now is not the result of the state's generosity - it's because we struggled together.

It's now our responsibility - those of us who are now free - to see to it that all of our comrades who are still in prison get released. First of all, those who are ill must be released: Bernd Roßner, Isabel Jacob, and Ali Jansen.

Bernd has been in prison for 17 years. He was a part of the Holger Meins Commando that occupied the West German embassy in Stockholm in an attempt to win the release of political prisoners. He was held in isolation for several years and he remains separated from all the other political prisoners. Bernd has been ill since 1983. Since that time, his lawyers have consistently maintained that his illness is due to the 8 years he spent in isolation. In June 1988, it was decided that Bernd is medically unfit for detention. And that was four years ago!

Bernd has struggled for his identity to this very

day. He is unbroken. His body and his physical condition have been so savagely attacked by the inhuman prison system, that Prof. Rasch testified in May/92 that with each passing day and week that Bernd spends in prison, the danger increases that he will indeed have served a "life-long sentence". That means, Bernd is in danger of losing his life so long as he remains in prison.

The federal government and the Düsseldorf district court refuse to release him. They are working on new plans to destroy Bernd and to break his identity. When the matter of his release is discussed, they mention closed psychiatric care. They have tried for years to force Bernd into psychiatric care. They are continuing this process today.

His release must be central to us. The release of further prisoners rests on this. That means, no more prisoners will take political-judicial steps as long as Bernd is not free.

The struggle for the release of political prisoners is, for us, a part of the continuity of our revolutionary struggle for liberation from the imperialist system and for freedom from the clutches of the state. This is closely tied to the discussions which have taken place here on the outside: the anti-racist struggle, the anti-G7 mobilization, the "500 Years of Colonialism and Resistance" campaign, and even with the squatters' struggle against housing shortages.

The goal and means which we have struggled for and worked towards, we see in those people getting beaten down by the cops today in Mannheim. It has taken a struggle to be able to demonstrate in this manner. Many people have ended up in prison for doing political work supporting political prisoners. The police attacks in Mannheim, and the special conditions put in place there, are also being planned for Munich; these, like the isolation-torture used against us in the prisons, are designed to keep us from our goals and to deter our struggle for a humane society.

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if you don't cheat along this knowledge you'll be able to learn by recognizing your own mistakes - both the avoidable and the unavoidable mistakes which were forced on you by the superiority of the state.

Dellwo: Do we have to call that "defeat"? We are speaking of boundaries we reached. Of course we wanted more. But we made a lot of very important experiences. And we are steady. It wasn't easy but it's possible.

Ebermann: I feel a deep hatred for all the scum commenting on everything with: "there are possibilities and dangers in it". The reason why we are debating about "boundaries" and "defeat" and why we do this so vehemently, is that the key for all dirty tricks is this notion of inherent "possibilities and danger".

Folkerts: What does this have to do with us?

Gremliza: Nothing yet.

Taufer: Whether you call it "boundary" or "defeat", the important thing is a relation of honesty, self-consciousness and self-criticism towards one's own history.

Folkerts: The occasion to this talk is the RAF's declaration. And the essential thing is that they took this step. This should be your subject and not criticism of individual points.

Gremliza: I haven't criticized the declaration yet but I have tried to discover its meaning. What does it mean when the RAF stops the attacks on persons? What are they going to do instead of this? If the prisoners are released, will the RAF still exist? And if, how? I didn't read about that in the declaration.

Folkerts: One can not determine that yet. It's an open process.

Gremliza: But the decision to end the armed struggle is your decision, too?

Folkerts: We won't retreat from that. But if you see the declaration, you see that there is a beginning and an end. You cannot voluntarily eject yourself out of a situation. The transition itself is a process of struggle, which will decide about opening possibilities. So there is something coming back to everyone: the responsibility for the changed situation.

Gremliza: For Kinkel's reconciliation?

Folkerts: This word "reconciliation" is completely wrong. The contradictions are antagonistic and they will always be. We are coming out of these contradictions. The RAF made public that the contradictions will be carried out in a certain sharpness.

Gremliza: If the prisoners don't want this reconciliation - i.e. if they don't offer anything to the state - the subject of release is up to the calculation solely of the ruling class. They can keep you - for security reasons - in prison. Or they can release you, hoping to be able to walk their dogs without bodyguards. This is a subject that Mr. Kinkel, Ms. Vollmer (Green party leader) and Mr. Waigel (government official) have to negotiate with their clientele. This is not a question for the Left.

Folkerts: Indeed, there was influence from the economic elite. They paid 20 years for this state security, which never brought the results they were waiting for. It came to the point where large corporations were sending checks to the BND (intelligence service) to finance secret activities. In these activities hirelings were paid (parallel to the

official apparatus) to track and kill RAF-members in foreign countries. The president of this intelligence service (BND) was Kinkel, among others.

Gremliza: Maybe they didn't get rid of you like they wished, but you're not going to claim that this RAF-declaration is a state's document of surrender to the RAF?

Folkerts: It's not self-aggrandizing to point out after 22 years that they couldn't destroy the RAF. The RAF has shown an ability to act politically. You cannot claim that about the other side.

Dellwo: This declaration is addressed to the Left in the first place, with the question if - in contrast to the mid-70s when this was impossible - we can create a connection in different struggles. If we can do that, we can quit this relation of war to the other side. This would enable the other side to change their relation to us. If this is not possible and everybody is just sitting around and lamenting, then we have to ask ourselves what to do then. We are saying to this Left: We all tried certain projects over the past 25 years, and we all made certain experiences. Let's draw some conclusions now.

Gremliza: And what do you expect to be the answer of the state?

Dellwo: Freedom for all the (political) prisoners.

Gremliza: Are there any conditions for the method of release? Should it be a kind of amnesty?

Dellwo: The method is secondary to me as long as all the prisoners will be released within a foreseeable future. We will not agree to a solution of releases after 15 years [in Germany, prisoners with life sentences may be eligible for parole after 15 years]. That would mean some of us will be imprisoned for 5 or 10 more years. The method is their problem. I don't want to deal with their normative problems.

Gremliza: Will the prisoners accept any conditions for their release?

Dellwo: They attempt to make us deny and to reject our own history. They want a creed to their authority. But this is not the end of their demands. The parole hearing of Günter Sonnenberg shows that. After Günter was shot in the head in 1977, he was in the same situation like Rudi Dutschke was. [Dutschke was a SDS-leader in the 1960s and was shot in the head by a worker in 1969, who knew about Dutschke from the media. Dutschke survived this shooting but since that day he suffered from epileptic attacks. He died from one from such an attack in 1979.] Günter also had to learn everything anew. They held him in isolation for years and years. Not only did he have to fight against isolation, but also against the consequences of the shooting. The demand in many hungerstrikes - Günter participated in all these strikes - was to get him in a group, to be able to learn talking again, against the epileptic attacks, and to give him a comrade he can trust. That was necessary from medical point of view anyway. At one point, they brought him a TV-set to his cell and said: "Okay, here is something you can relate to now." They wanted to turn him into a vegetable. What they said now in the parole-hearing is: "Well, you can talk, you're physically in a good condition - you have to admit, we treated you well." They wanted him to deny the pain they did to him, even to thank them. There's no lack of cynicism.

Folkerts: While they presumably don't know of any political prisoners, they wanted a political statement about the RAF-declaration from Günter Sonnenberg. In

a statement about Bernd Rößner's [RAF prisoner] serious illness the Federal Prosecutor stated in April 1992 that Bernd needs to remain in prison (after 17 years) to obtain a change of his convictions. And the OLG [senior court] Frankfurt ruled about Ali Jansen [political prisoner] that "although there might be a greater sensitivity for punishment because of his asthmatic attacks, no change of convictions has resulted from that yet."

All this shows that the state security apparatus cannot be the resort of jurisdiction. And it should be clear from the past: Stammheim is known worldwide for the failed attempt to eliminate fundamental opposition and to depoliticize the struggle at the same time.

Dellwo: Though they want that in first place I'm not willing to reject my past. And though we have reached a certain boundary today, it was right that the RAF was founded. There's a historical and moral legitimation for armed struggle to have existed in this society.

Folkerts: Of course, we're not surprised about their persistence at this point: they are starting with the knowledge that you can determine the future if you define the past. Nothing but their universe of commodities and money is allowed to exist. Caught within this madness, they think they are the end of history. But they couldn't even begin solving any problem within the society.

Ebermann: Your statements seem rather non-tactical to me.

Dellwo: Maybe they are. But they have to take it as it is. We can't use tactics at this point. They can say that they had to fight us and they were right to do it - I don't care. But they have to accept that they couldn't break our awareness of ourselves [political consciousness]. If they can't accept that, we don't see any way for a solution. We will never come to common views with them.

Ebermann: I'm not afraid of the word surrender. If you are succumbed by a superior force (as described by Lenin at the time of the "Peace of Brest-Litovsk") surrender is reasonable, and you have to act against the talking heads who demand heroic postures.

Taufer: The issue is not heroic postures but our history. We didn't fight for 18 years to throw it away now - although it is necessary to deal with our mistakes.

Folkerts: They still want to erase us and our history.

Dellwo: I can't do that. I can't go there and speak tactically. If they are asking for that - you can only stand up for your project. There were always too few within the Left who would stick out their necks and play for all the stakes. I mean this in a quite non-dramatical way. I'm not the person for their moral remonstrances. We have different morals.

Ebermann: This is true. For people like me it is difficult not to mix up what were political disagreements with you and what was simply a consideration for my own safety. The whole history of the Left and the RAF is not exclusively a history of political disagreements, but also a history of the missing will to stand up for something you think is right. We have to defend principled positions against an attitude that promotes success as the only criteria for political action. If we don't do that, we will not be prepared for the things which have to be done in the future, even individually. There are always situations when you can't change the course of history but you still have a lot of different possibilities for your own actions. For example in Nazi-Germany: it was impossible to organize successful resistance at that time. But you could

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We Must Search For Something New

Red Army Fraction Discussion Paper - August 1992

"Proletarian revolutions...naturally critique themselves, they take breaks in their steps forward, they seemingly end up back where they started, they jeer at the cruelly fundamental shortcomings, weaknesses, and miserable experiences of their first attempts. But when they seem to have thrown their opponents down, thereby sucking new life out of the earth and once again aligning themselves against the enemy, they are shocked at the new realization of the incredible degree of their own purpose, until such time as the time is right, when it's no longer possible to turn back, and the conditions cry out: Hic Rhodus; Hic Salta."

- Karl Marx



In our letter of April 10, we stated that we realized that one of our mistakes has been too little discussion of our own processes. We have been sharply criticized for this from all sides. What we offered was self-indulgence, not answers to the questions which arose from our political situation. It was unnecessary, apolitical chatter, and besides this, we failed on our promise to discuss our mistakes. Rather than have all of this get us upset, we would like to briefly go into all of this.

Today, when we take a step forward in our history, it's important to reflect also on our history, to make it useful for both ourselves and for others. Anything else would be pointless. We have a history of 22 years of struggle, and it's important in this country to learn as much as possible from the experiences of those struggles so as to move on into the future. That's why we need to discuss mistakes, so that they won't be repeated in the future. Our identity and our pride are not based on a notion of infallibility, nor do we think that mistakes should call into question the legitimacy of revolutionary struggles. On the contrary: we have some things to say that we think are relevant to future struggles.

We would like to have an open discussion with all those who are struggling for changes here. Open means talking about everything which is significant, and not feeling the need to have one's own, radiant position on every issue. Comrades who go about things in that way should rid themselves of that bourgeois tendency - the bourgeois are pleasing unto themselves. The experience that such an outlook brings nothing good has been proven by the socialist states. Many liberation movements had to then adjust to this, and so did we. This is an outlook from a past epoch and won't be of any use in the future. There are many people here who swallow up the texts of Trikont [the 3 continents of the so-called "Third World" - Asia, Africa and Latin America - ed.] liberation movements and then criticize a past phase and, from that, develop a plan for the next phase. But when we do this, there's an uproar.

The rigid tendency to cling to certain clear notions is often times a sign of a fear of criticism, and it's also often an attempt to avoid one's own uncertainties and the questions of others. If we didn't talk about our experiences, we'd have to take all the criticisms levelled against us, which we have struggled against over the last few years, and drag them through one enormous discussion. We aren't concerned with this. Taking a step forward means, to us, engaging in a deep-reaching process of discussion rather than removing ourselves from the discussions. It has become increasingly clear to us over the last few weeks that we need to be more concrete in our

discussions about what we have been up to for the last few years so that people can more easily understand our recent steps. We know that some comrades see our steps not only as the result of the changed international situation, but rather one we should have taken back in '89. But the proposal to see our role of the last few years as "a form of confrontation" is also unrealistic. This can't be guerrilla politics. Guerrilla politics is a permanent process of searching for right answers within the existing, changing political situation, and also a redevelopment of one's own strength.

In our discussion process since '89/'90, it became increasingly clear within the group that we had to break off from our old clarities, directions, and orientations and make a change. We would not be able to find solutions for new situations in old goals. Now, we can only speak of our own discussions and process and not those of our imprisoned comrades. We see this text as a part of a discussion with them. In any case, they hardly have the opportunity to take full part in this discussion. That's another reason why we must fight for their freedom.

As for our history in the 1980's: not a single one of us who are in the RAF today was a member prior to 1984. That means that we did not take part in the discussions in the group in the early 80's, for example when the "Front Paper" [in May 1982, the RAF released a paper which called for the building of an anti-imperialist front in Europe with the urban guerrilla as the vanguard - ed.] was issued. To come to a full understanding of our history at this time - and even more so for the history since the 70's - we need to have a discussion with our imprisoned comrades.

For those of us who joined the guerrilla in '84 and thereafter, the early 80's were a time of significant experiences, decisions, and changes in our country, and from out of these came the decision to take up armed struggle. This was a period of struggle around many issues: the anti-NATO movement; the 1981 hungerstrike of the political prisoners, during which Sigurd Debus was murdered; anti-nuclear struggles; struggles against Startbahn West [NATO runway in Frankfurt - ed.]; squatting actions; and of course the mass-mobilizations against the stationing of cruise missiles. We took part in these struggles ourselves and we had the same experience as everyone else: we can't break through this power.

During this time, there weren't just hundreds of thousands of people on the streets, it was also about contradictions involving millions of people, and they weren't able to make the powers budge on even one demand - so it's only logical that the struggles became more radical and more militant. Many people decided to

organize various militant initiatives during these years, especially for attacking the U.S./NATO military strategy. This was designed to give our struggles a new strength and vitality. Every day, the state just ignored the protests of hundreds of thousands of people in the streets, while at the same time attacking these people who took their demands to the streets harder and harder. It was only a coincidence that our side didn't suffer more deaths (Klaus Jürgen Rattay, Olaf Ritzmann) and serious injuries than it did. The cruelty and brutality inflicted on the prisoners in the '81 hungerstrike and the club and gas attacks by police and para-military units showed that the state was prepared to cause deaths to our side. Of the stationing of the cruise missiles, Kohl remarked: "They protest; we govern." This summed up the balance of power against all those who wanted something different.

These developments were also to be noticed at the international level, for example in the confrontations between liberation movements and liberated nations and imperialism. This was the time of coordinated roll-back: the cruise missiles were to hold the Soviets in check; the bombing of Libya; the Malvinas war; the destruction of the Palestinian refugee camps in Sabra, Shatila, Tel Zaatar; against the liberation movement in El Salvador; low-intensity warfare to drag out wars and wear out the population; conflict in the lands of southern Africa; the contra war, which prevented independent development and led to deaths from war and hunger. We can only briefly sketch the developments of these years; in each case, imperialism sought to fulfill its centuries-old dream of subduing all of humanity with all forms of violence, including nuclear weapons. It sought to push through its plans and projects despite massive contradictions, and thus all forms of resistance had to be crushed and dissolved.

So it became increasingly clear to us and many others that we had to build up a strength here which could also make use of militant and militarist methods. From all our experiences of these years, it was clear that we needed a new quality of struggle if we wanted to confront this power - the only alternative was to give up and subject ourselves to this power. For ever more people, the proposal set forth by the RAF in '82 in the "Front Paper" - namely, to organize together as guerrilla, militant, and resistance - seemed to fit with the consequences of peoples' own experiences. For some of us, it meant that in 1984, we decided to join the guerrilla.

There were many considerations which led us to believe that our struggles had to become increasingly militant in their organization if we hoped to achieve anything. That was clear during the '84/'85 hungerstrike.

During this campaign, many people from various groups carried out fire-bomb attacks and attacks with explosives to press the demand for the regroupment of the political prisoners, and this was a concrete result of the experiences of the early 80's. Many people realized that if the demands were to be pushed through, if we were to insure that that state didn't just murder the prisoners during the strike, then we would have to employ a variety of methods from demos to press conferences to struggles with a higher degree of confrontation.

It's always the same with the spiral of violence - the struggles of the left and the revolutionary forces are always made responsible. To this, what we have said briefly about the developments from the early 80's shows that it was clearly different than this. The decision to form a guerrilla and to take on armed struggle was a decision made by people all around the world in response to the ruling conditions; to the ignorance of the ruling powers in the face of peoples' demands and struggles; to the continuation of destructive developments and war despite massive resistance; to repression and exploitative relations with regard to the resistance. When you seek to change those conditions which don't allow you and others to live, the decision to take up arms is always made last - never first. You first try many other methods, and then you make the decision - ultimately a life or death decision - that it's clear or at least somewhat more clear that an armed force is necessary, because without it nothing will be achieved.

Throughout its entire 22 year history, the RAF has always been a relatively small group. During this time, the imprisonment of comrades almost wiped us out more than once, but from the relations and contradictions in this country, there were always more comrades who took up the armed struggle and carried it forward to press for changes in these conditions. The year 1984 was such a year for us. That summer, seven comrades were imprisoned and state again openly celebrated our total demise. For us, the fact was that no one involved in guerrilla politics from the earlier years remained.

In '84, we made our attempt to make a common offensive by West European guerrilla groups together with the militant resistance here and we often came under heavy pressure. On the one hand, there were those that were apprehensive of imperialism achieving a total victory if we did not make a common intervention quickly. They were to develop a power force here in the metropolises which, along with the world-wide liberation movements, would prevent imperialism from turning back history. On the other hand there was us with our experiences. We were afraid that the state would once again be able to inflict heavy damage on us before we had even taken the first steps towards this common front.

The "front" concept assumed that our development of a force in the power-centers would be able to confront the development and escalation of imperialism in its attempt to roll-back the world-wide liberation movements. We didn't envision the success of any of the liberation movements. Despite this, the number of victims increased. Everywhere, the numbers of dead and wounded and displaced persons increased, with no end to the war in sight - quite the contrary, for low-intensity warfare strategy which imperialism was escalating during this period was designed to wear people down and deny them their hopes of a life of dignity, freedom, and self-determination by confronting them with the prospects of never-ending war. Our attempt was to break through the boundaries which had been imposed upon the world-wide liberation struggle and to prevent imperialism's victory by blocking its efforts in the power-centers. That was our central idea: to build the front in Europe as one part of a global liberation front.

The consequences of the unfolding of imperialism's international strategies here in the metropolises was a decline in many peoples' living conditions.

The number of people no longer needed by Capital to achieve profits steadily rose, while at the same time production became increasingly focused on military production, and restructuring meant that hundreds of thousands of jobs were rationalized away. It was the time of the 2/3 society being pushed through here, in other words, the powers made it clear that 1/3 of the population were no longer needed and were superfluous - and that they should also feel as such. On account of imperialism's focus on roll-back and war, the rich nations of Western Europe - especially West Germany and France - linked up their high-tech and military industries. This was designed to form the states of Western Europe into a common political trading bloc so as to match the power of Japan and the USA.

We raised these points in our common offensive with our comrades in Action Directe and militant groups here, since the fast and efficient implementation of this would determine whether the West European states would be able to fulfill their specific role in the war against the liberation struggles. We saw our central role in this as aligning with all revolutionary forces in Western Europe, wherever possible, so as to organize against this development. For us, that meant: to sharpen the international strategy in our own country through our attacks on the strategic pillars of imperialist politics.

At that time we were conscious of the fact that there were very few of us here and in all of Western Europe and we accepted that as natural. Working from this assumption, in other words, from our own weak forces, we were convinced that we could come to a sharp form of action. In this time of global escalation of war and destruction, we didn't really discuss building a relevant force to counter this development, but rather we sought to unite the various more-or-less isolated agitating revolutionary

forces.

With our first steps in the development of this front proposal, we found ourselves in the middle of a historical upheaval. And even though we weren't conscious of it then, we were really running against the times. Even afterwards we thought, if we don't act fast, it'll be too late, and imperialism will have decided the entire epoch in its favor.

Our orientation towards the possibility of swift and sharp action in our initiatives had, in hindsight, catastrophic effects. This way of thinking leads automatically to militarist escalation and obscures the view of political processes and possibilities. In the various multiple struggles we didn't see any possibilities or room for ideas, rather we only saw separation, instead of searching for what linked the various consciousnesses together so as to find out together what was going on. In this limited political corner, it wasn't possible for the front concept to develop a strong political force. Our practice was primarily determined by the political explosiveness of our targets and the coordinated sharpness of our actions.

So we never saw the possibility to renew and redevelop the links to the struggles of the early 80's, the struggles which we ourselves came out of. That which arose from the consequences of the lack of results of our struggles - namely, common organizing and choice of targets - could have been an answer for others' experiences. Many people over the years just withdrew into resignation, but this shouldn't have happened. These people didn't come to grips with the system and its destructiveness, but they did resign themselves to it, because they hadn't found any answers for how to push through changes here. We had an answer, or at least a start, but we weren't able to explain how we could renew the links with the movements and the people who, for

Statement By Irmgard Möller Regarding The RAF Cease-Fire

We'd like to briefly state the following: the decision made by our comrades on the outside is a correct one, one which identifies a political process which we prisoners are also a part of.

We have wanted - ever since '89 - to make a break in the entire political spectrum, and such a step can only be taken by all of us together, not just in the area of prisoners.

We see this now much clearer than we did in the mid-80s, and the hunger-strike of '89 was the first time we made this a part of our political praxis.

The fact that the global and domestic social contradictions are so deep makes the simple pressing-forward of the politics and praxis of the 70s and 80s impossible.

Whoever sees the necessity of the revolutionary change of the existing global and domestic injustices and destructive relationships should also see the need for a change and re-orientation of political content and forms, also in relation to other leftist experiences and ways of living.

We prisoners see this as our task both for now and "after prison".

Re-orientating within society and within international groupings and conditions requires an open learning process.

This must first be achieved for the 4 sick prisoners. Bernd and Günter must be released immediately.

With their release, a rational moment can exist for discussions between the political prisoners and the state.

This means a thorough break for all involved.

A break with our 22-year history.

We are not trying to fool anyone when we say that we want to achieve freedom for all of us within a foreseeable period of time. We don't expect this to happen right away or for all of us at once.

But we'd like to make it clear that, after 22 years of considering and criticising the attempted destruction of the prisoners (with everything from special legislation to isolation) - against which we struggled as a collective, a struggle in which 9 imprisoned comrades died, although in the end we wrecked the state's plans - after all these decades, there can be no talk of a normal "solution".

That just isn't realistic, and it's a ridiculous thought to anyone who has become familiar with Germany's justice system and state security apparatus over the last 25 years and who doesn't want to disregard their own political history.

The state can't own history; the state's official version is not ours.

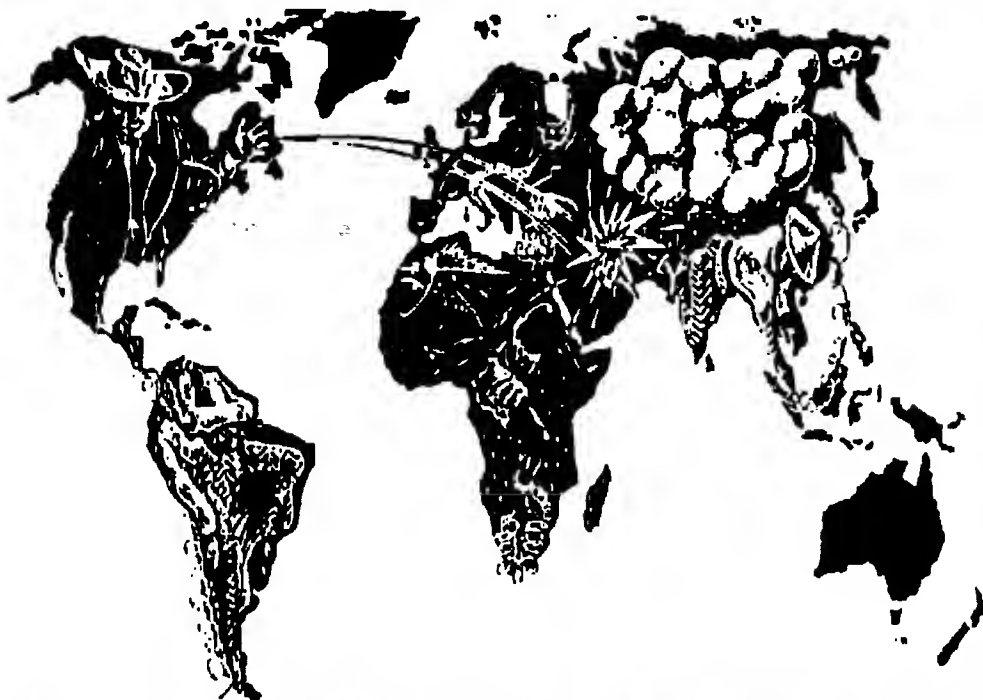
It's just a matter of dealing politically with social contradictions.

We, the prisoners from the RAF and the resistance, and the RAF have made room for this.

This has nothing to do with "tactics".

Irmgard Möller, on behalf of the prisoners from the RAF and the resistance

15.4.92 Lilbeck



example, were struggling against the stationing of the cruise missiles and imperialist destruction, or who were struggling against projects like the Wackersdorf atomic program, and how we could make a common strength against this destruction together with these people. Our notion of a "front" was too narrow for some people, it was only designed for those in the internationalist struggle against the strategic imperialist developments. There was no room for other ideas and proposals.

There were other comrades involved in the front process whose history and experiences were in the anti-NATO movement and who wanted to develop the front concept so that we seek ties to unite the struggles. But our narrow focus and that of others seemed to allow no room for the thoughts and proposals of these comrades. For these comrades, a central point was always the question of how our initiatives could help develop a broad and strong force. But we hardly touched on these points in our discussions. We were more concerned with estimating imperialist developments and advances and looking at our lines of attack against this. When other comrades wanted to develop the front into a different revolutionary strength, when they questioned our statement of the need to "wage the war here at the level of the international counter-revolution", we often just dismissed this as signs of personal weakness and indecisiveness. This political problem of the diversity of political outlooks was often just negated and dismissed as subjectivism.

One of our fundamental thoughts during those years, namely that the level of confrontation between the revolutionary forces and imperialism here in the metropolises was to be determined by the sharpness of the international confrontation, contradicted the development of a broad revolutionary force here. We often said that such actions serve to polarize, which is true, but they also produce false divisions, rather than bringing people together.

Our actions against responsible military leaders, economic officials, and functionaries from the political apparatus were deemed effective and morally legitimate by many people. They were legitimate actions which sprang from the sharpness of our own living situation and oppression, and they made millions of people realize that the powers that be are responsible for war and global distress. This wasn't the case with the Air Base action when the GI was shot [On August 8/1985, the George Jackson Commando of the RAF carried out a bomb attack

at the Rhein-Main Air Base near Frankfurt. RAF militants were able to gain entry to the Air Base using the ID card of an American GI, Edward Pimental, whom they had murdered the day before - ed.] Neither of these were developed from the situation here, neither had a basis in conditions here which people could identify with, rather its basis was the war being waged by imperialism and the U.S. army in other parts of the world. In terms of further developing a revolutionary struggle here and finding roots in the society, it was a big mistake.

"Our heads are round, that way we can change directions in our thought."

In 1989, we were confronted with the legacy which the front process has left for us. There were arrests and heavy sentences handed down to comrades in the legal resistance and investigations for "membership in the RAF" against people all over Germany, and many comrades in the anti-imperialist resistance began to withdraw. At the same time, many groups fell apart. Many people who saw a role for themselves in the front process became resigned or, at least, frustrated. The foundations of the May Paper of 1982 - the common front between the guerrilla and the resistance - were a step in the right direction, but we were not successful in developing a productive link between the struggle of the guerrilla and the struggles of other comrades who had developed a praxis from other modes of life, and we were not able to revive and advance and strengthen the revolutionary process.

In capitalism, hierarchy is a part of the social structure which everyone is subjected to from day one. We didn't dissolve this structure within our own ranks. Through our strong orientation on attacks and our sole orientation towards the projects and strategies of imperialism, we reproduced this structure within our own group. These were false divisions which stood between us and other comrades, and again between them and others in the legal associations. In this structure, the guerrilla was not only a special part of the struggle, rather it was the absolute part. Waging armed struggle here and operating from a status of illegality was not seen a part of a larger whole, rather we regarded it as the highest form of struggle. Many people measured themselves according to this and were broken by it. Today we see this as the result of being too focused on attacks on the power

structure. Through this concentration, armed actions were quickly regarded as the best or most important. But this form of evaluation stands in the way of revolutionary development.

At this time, we had a false orientation and we passed this on to others. Certainly, attacks on strategic projects of the ruling powers are an integral part of guerrilla politics. But it's wrong to become exclusively dedicated to this. Such an orientation doesn't aid in the question of the development of a political process. Understanding what steps to take and why the ruling powers need to be attacked should not exclude the need to discuss our own goals, which forces and struggles are near to our own, and what links can be sought out; links which are not renewed merely so that others begin to orient themselves to us.

We recognize today that one of our big mistakes was to wholly adopt the orientation of our previous comrades back in '84 without questioning it, and accepting the "Front Paper" as correct without seeing what we should change or redevelop. We only did this as the result of our actions; it became increasingly clear that Western Europe, with Germany at its head, was going to rise to become a world power.

From the experiences in Nicaragua and El Salvador in particular, a new discussion of the possibilities of armed struggle arose. The Sandinistas had shown that reality was different than they had previously assumed. The liberation struggle doesn't always play out as the theory directs; the people didn't support the guerrilla, rather the armed forces supported the people. In the last phase, the orientation became centered on the struggle of the people. From El Salvador came the discussion of the experience of double-power: the FMLN had always recognized that the organization of day-to-day life had to go hand-in-hand with the rest of the struggle.

We examined these experiences, but failed to see what they meant to us, rather we just decided that the situation in these countries was different and left it at that. These developments - just as after the Intifada in Palestine in '87 - were the beginning of new processes of orientation of armed liberation struggles in many countries towards the idea of organizing from below. "The problem is as follows, is the guerrilla in a position to form a realistic power alternative, is it an option for the peoples' movement; not to be a alien body which the peoples' movement is obliged to follow, rather a project whose base and rearguard is its center of power." (a quotation from comrades in UCEBLN, Colombia)

These new orientations were also the result of changes in the international balance of power, when it became clear that success would only be achieved through a much longer struggle. We didn't sufficiently realize this and we only escalated in response to imperialist roll-back.

One result of our conduct at that time was the drying up of our discussions with many political comrades. Many people we were previously associated with, on account of the hierarchy which was the logical result of these political proposals, didn't criticize us or push through their own contradictions, proposals, or thoughts. In many peoples' eyes, we were The authority, and they oriented themselves to us and failed to further develop their own thoughts. We ourselves were often not open to criticism and we had no positive proposals for the variety of thoughts for the development of another side. So we lost the chance to develop a broader orientation from a living process of exchange.

In all that we are self-critiquing now, no one should forget that we also made mistakes in other realms. The world-wide counter-revolution, the Contras in Nicaragua, Angola, and Mozambique; NATO's arms race; the military attacks on Libya and Grenada; the resonating increase in the distress on the Three Continents - this was the reality which we were operating within. Internally,

there was the extremely high degree of repression which excluded all thoughts of a viable revolutionary development for those people put under heavy pressure. The years 1985/86 were also the high-point of the smear campaign against us, when TV accounts came out daily. The repression which followed the '86 Offensive [The RAF and other guerrilla organizations, carried out a number of attacks during this period. The RAF along with the French guerrilla organization, Action Directe, had formed an anti-imperialist front in Europe and some of the actions they carried included the assassinations of Karl-Heinz Beckurts and Gerald von Braunmühl - ed.] was the state's answer to the beginnings of a commonly-acting front, which, due to its narrow orientation, was no longer able to further develop the process for us.

In this case, we let the political process slip through our hands. We never dealt with the question of becoming rooted in the society. Our reaction was to expand the confrontation from our side. In doing this, we introduced false impulses into the discussions of the resistance movement. After the '86 Offensive, we decided that the only answer to increased repression was to organize in illegality. The question of how to bring the state to its political boundaries wasn't central to our discussion. So we helped bring about a process where more and more comrades defensively withdrew from open associations and dropped out of discussions, even when they saw no perspectives for themselves and couldn't imagine adopting illegality. In many cities, this happened to such a degree that the demand for regroupment [for the imprisoned members of the RAF and the resistance - ed.] was never made in public. For a long time, people no longer struggled for an open space to make this demand. During this time, there were of course illegal leaflets and newspapers, but these can only achieve so much.

This was the background to which the state saw an opportunity to turn the screws a little tighter by hitting comrades with heavy sentences who had pushed the demand for regroupment.

Alongside this development, for us and those in political associations with us, there were other divisive political developments such as the struggle around Startbahn West which reached its peak with the shooting of the cops in November 1987. At the same time, the struggle to preserve the Hafenstraße [A group of squatted buildings in Hamburg which has been the focus of strong repression by the state. The state has long maintained that the Hafenstraße is a "RAF nest" - ed.] was an entirely new experience. This was a different process than our own.

This was an experience which increasingly worked its way into our consciousness. It started many discussions in our ranks and got us thinking about how those people were able to wage a committed struggle for their goal, to live according to their own perspective, and to stand up to the state apparatus with the same commitment, while successfully struggling along with thousands of different people throughout the city and elsewhere. It wasn't only this form of coalition politics in which everything functioned to push through whatever position possible, but rather the discussion of a common advance was central, while at the same time sifting through and understanding everything, despite the various histories and proposals of the people involved. They carried out this process to its conclusion out in the open. With this strength, they withstood the "hard line" politics of the state. That was the first time since 1977, when the state pushed the resistance to its absolute limits with the murders of Gudrun, Andreas, and Jan [3 founders of the RAF who were

murdered by the state in 1977 at Stammheim prison - ed.], that there was the experience of being able to push through a struggle despite the state's opposition.

The Hafen events made it possible once again for people to experience the fact that it is possible to develop another way of living. A life that is not crushed by the principles of capitalism's day-to-day reality. Because the comrades there were very clear about their goals, the struggle was able to attract a lot of people. And out of the Hafenstraße arose many subsequent internationalist initiatives which launched discussions well beyond the Hafen's own boundaries, for example the Palestinian slogans on the outside walls, or the support which was given to the Roma being threatened with deportation. These initiatives showed how closely tied international solidarity is to peoples' conditions here and how it can be developed from a position of strength. (And we say this in opposition to the remarks made by Georg Fülberth in the August edition of "Konkret", when he said that the struggles for living conditions and social change here had no bearing on the global situation and were, in fact, often to the benefit of the ruling powers.)

The concrete result of the struggle around the Hafenstraße was a reversal of the defensive posture which was adopted after the state attacks on the front process and other revolutionary associations. It was a strong impulse which was taken up into our discussions. That's another reason why we more than once had taken an interest in the Hafenstraße in recent years.

Of course we also experienced the fact that many people there today are clueless - like many others. But we think it's important in the discussions to see what was significant in their experiences, as will also be shown in the next phases of the struggle. And to you all in the Hafenstraße: what's going on with you all? We have heard that you all rarely involve yourselves in discussions anymore. We can hardly imagine that your experiences have brought you to a position of not having anything to offer in response to the resignation and weakness which are present everywhere. How is it you all aren't able to link yourselves to anything and get on the road of the search?

The "Initiative for the Defense of the Hafenstraße", with its call for the regroupment of our imprisoned comrades, took a big step towards fighting back against

criminalization and making room for discussion. The call made possible the massive mobilization around the '89 hungerstrike. It was significant that there were people who didn't let their thoughts get directed by the expected response of the state security apparatus, but rather worked towards their own goals from their own experiences.

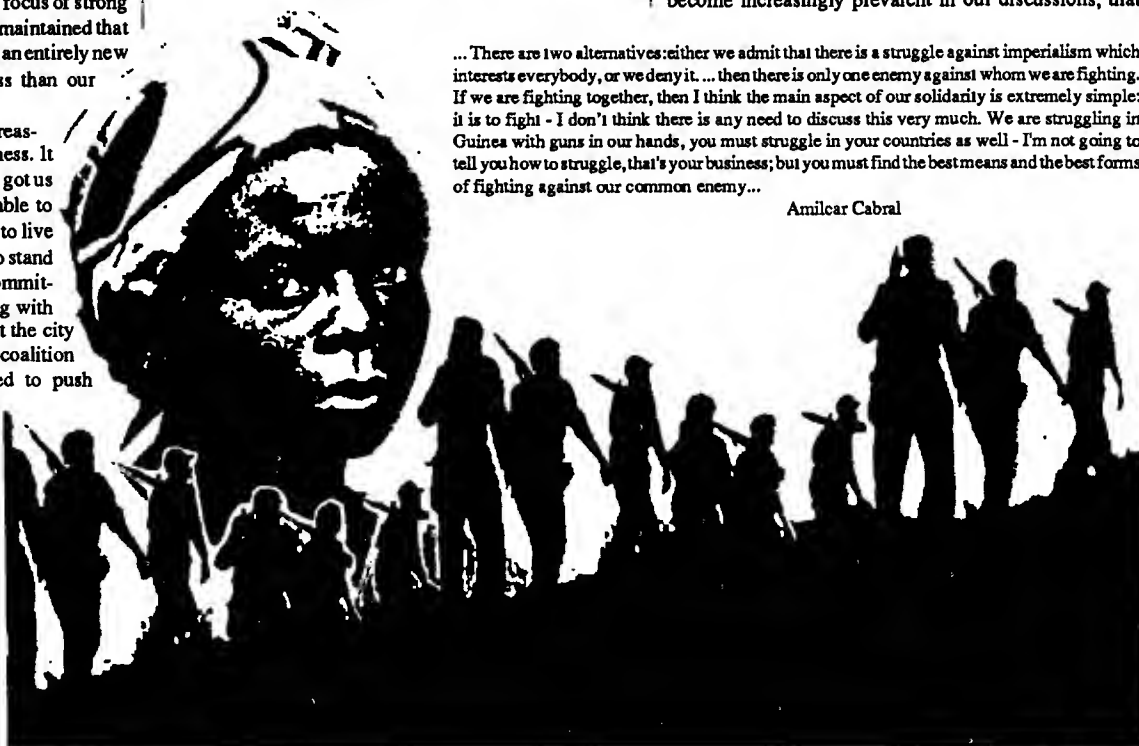
Another impulse which was significant in our discussions came from our imprisoned comrades. In around their hungerstrike of 1989, in their hungerstrike declaration, as well as in their letters, they made it clear that they wanted to initiate a discussion around the reorientation of the revolutionary struggle. They wanted to search and restore new links and discussions with all people who were involved in the resistance process over the years, or who were struggling for change in other sectors of society. They prisoners were very open and discussed many of their past mistakes. In doing so, they broke with a long-standing tradition which we were still stuck in, namely to quickly perceive all criticism directed at us a negative and to therefore ignore it. This old tradition was the result of years of experience with being confronted at all levels with an agitating counter apparatus which the society utilized to wage psychological warfare and smear campaigns against us and other revolutionary forces, even in so-called leftist media such as the "TAZ" [A daily "leftist" newspaper, ideologically close to the Greens, which consistently attacked the RAF and guerrilla politics - ed.]

This revived in us a long-dormant analysis of criticisms. An analysis which we had previously overlooked, namely of where the critiques were coming from and why, and what could be correct in all of it. Through the fact that the prisoners had taken a broader look at new developments in the resistance and in society as a whole and adopted this into their struggles, they strengthened us in our search and development.

For us, the situation in '89 put a lot of questions on the table. We had reached the limits of the front process. At the same time, new struggles had developed around us, and the entire international situation had changed as well. At first, our thoughts of a new orientation and development were very timid. At that time, it was the beginning of a process of separating ourselves from old notions - or, we could say, liberating ourselves. That meant separating ourselves from the notion, which had become increasingly prevalent in our discussions, that

... There are two alternatives: either we admit that there is a struggle against imperialism which interests everybody, or we deny it. ... then there is only one enemy against whom we are fighting. If we are fighting together, then I think the main aspect of our solidarity is extremely simple: it is to fight - I don't think there is any need to discuss this very much. We are struggling in Guinea with guns in our hands, you must struggle in your countries as well - I'm not going to tell you how to struggle, that's your business; but you must find the best means and the best forms of fighting against our common enemy...

Amílcar Cabral



the strength of a revolutionary movement was determined by its ability to escalate its attacks in response to the imperialist system.

The period '89/'90 was the time for us when we began to question the last few years of our history and to test out the notions and ideas from the front discussions to see if they were correct. Whereas before we worked from the assumption that guerrilla politics should bring together all of the contradictions and attack them, we started asking ourselves whether we shouldn't instead start dealing more directly with the sharpening of peoples' living conditions and utilize our strength to push through changes in struggles already current, since neither the people of the Three Continents nor the people here have time to wait for global revolution.

In the May Paper of 82, our comrades wrote: "...our strategy is basically a strategy against their strategy..." Our implementation of this was actions which were directed at and which oriented ourselves around imperialism's plans and destructiveness.

In '89/'90, we repeatedly sought for a notion to develop as the guerrilla strategy. In our communique after the Herrhausen action in November '89, we said: "All of us in the entire revolutionary movement in Western Europe find ourselves before a new epoch. The entirely changed international situation and the entirely new developments here demand that the revolutionary process reorient itself and redevelop itself on new foundations...A new epoch, which for us means a new alignment of the revolutionary movement."

A new alignment of the revolutionary movement means, to us, searching for ties with new people who are struggling for changes in thousands of various sectors and with various demands. We were concerned with a process in which the guerrilla would have a role in searching for social change from below. We arrived at the notion of the 'guerrilla as a weapon for the social movement'.

This notion is correct, for without a social purpose, armed struggle has no possibility for development. For us, this was not a tactical question, but rather the realization that revolutionary politics could only be further developed on a fundamentally new basis.

As late as '88, the politics developed up until that point were carried out by an increasingly small number of comrades and had not launched any new process of politicization or organization. True, we could inflict losses on the ruling powers, but this didn't get us any

closer to our goals. We had to break out of this stagnation. In '89, it was clear: we need to search for something new. At that time it was clear which new struggles could be developed and when there were concrete and attainable goals which many people could rediscover themselves in. In various cities there were struggles for self-determined spaces (not merely buildings), and there was also the struggle of the prisoners for their lives and against their destruction.

We often said that the weakness of the '89 hunger-strike mobilization was its inability to push through the regroupment demand. The changes of '89 and the collapse of the DDR [formerly East Germany - ed.] and the entire state socialist system gave renewed power to the West German government. Against this background, the ruling powers decided to go hard line. The German state and German capital wielded seemingly unlimited power. In the face of such opposition, not even the strongest ever mobilization which we had ever managed in common with our imprisoned comrades could have success.

If the prisoners had not called off their strike in '89, and if the state had stuck to its hard line and brought about the deaths of some of the prisoners, then there would have been a further escalation on the outside. This was the opinion of many comrades, and of us as well. But the prisoners decided things differently: to stop the escalation, since it would have been pointless. Nonetheless they stuck to their goals, but insisted that the issue was their lives and that this was central. After they called off the strike, they expressed great trust in those that had taken part in the mobilization that many people would not drop this demand and that the prisoners could take part in the discussions, but also that there should be a struggle for the lives of the prisoners and against their destruction. The only weakness we see was that many people lapsed into resignation and dropped the struggle for the demand.

"We can only propose the changing of the entire conditions as a process in which we build a counter-power for the pushing through of concrete demands and goals. A counter-power which, along with the struggles of the people of the Three Continents, can push through necessary changes of the imperialist system and fight in a long-lasting struggle for the liberation of people."

(from the Rohwedder communique)

After '89 and after the hungerstrike, we were convinced that the concentrated power of the West German

...Günter Sonnenberg continued from page 26

Torture in the prisons, just like the blows being struck against young anti-fascists here on the outside, is designed to induce fear and distress, capitulation and resignation.

There is much which unites us, we have much in common.

In countless countries, peoples are confronted with an imperialist system which denies them their right to existence. Germany is a big part of this. One example: in Kurdistan, weapons from Germany are used by the Turkish army to destroy villages and murder Kurds.

Through proletarian internationalism and actions connected with this, revolutionary groups in Germany have helped aid the liberation movements of the Three Continents. What we have done up until now has not defeated imperialism. But these struggles have connected us somewhat to the conditions faced by revolutionaries in other countries. Today, we met people from other countries who were imprisoned over the last two decades. They, like us, are now struggling to free their imprisoned comrades from the clutches of the state.

That's why it's important to develop a new orientation and broaden revolutionary struggle at the same time. The similarities between their and our experiences, the commonality of goals and the warmth, intensity, and

precision of these encounters have given us a great hope that we can build a new revolutionary front, despite the new global conditions, to combat the destruction of peoples and their means of existence.

There are people from all across the world who have to live here for the time being and carry out their revolutionary struggle for the freedom of their land and people from here, or who come here simply to discuss with us.

In the meantime, we have exchanged a whole wealth of experiences relating to our experiences in the guerrilla, the prisons, and our political praxis. Our horizontal perspective has been broadened by these meetings. In this way, we can catch hold of, and together find the answers to the complex problems and contradictions in the world which are reflected in our own country.

One answer has to be, the release of all imprisoned revolutionaries.

On behalf of everyone, I'd like to name a few: Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Ingrid Möller, Alan Berkman, Geronimo Pratt, Nathalie Menigon, Dylcia Pagan, Susan Rosenberg, Manuel Hernandez, and many others!

Freedom for all political prisoners!

(From Angehörigen Info #96)

...RAF prisoners interview continued from page 27

still hide someone who was persecuted, although it surely would have been an exaggeration to claim to be involved in a project to bring down Hitler with that. You only could do it or leave it.

Taufer: This is an important point. It's not only about our situation when we insist on a correct and critical examination of our history. It's for the Left outside of prison, too. And, talking about the "Peace of Brest-Litovsk": Lenin's tactical compromise was not only a relief for the October Revolution, it was also a burden for others. If we made the peace they want us to make, it would be a burden on the Left in the long run.

state would push through its developments with any means available. Nonetheless, we saw our role as the guerrilla to place our weight on the scale wherever the achieving of necessary human developments was at issue, since the ruling powers need to always be opposed. One effect which we sought through our attacks in '89 was to break through the ruling powers' seemingly unlimited grasp on power and our own side's sense of powerlessness and to thereby struggle for political space.

One thought which was redeveloped in our discussions in this direction was the threatened eviction of the Mainzerstraße [squatted buildings in east Berlin which were evicted in 1990 after 3 days of heavy fighting with the police and other security forces - ed.] in Berlin. After this eviction, we were convinced that it was right to answer such an eviction immediately. This would have been of little benefit to those people, but an action from us could have influenced other struggles. The fact that we were forced to make such an answer in the Rohwedder communique had the function of making the state make a cost-benefit analysis in contemplating an eviction of the Hafenstraße (since that was once again an issue). 'Taking us into account' meant that the state should bear in mind that such an eviction would have directly lead to a coming together of the struggle for a self-determined living space and the struggle of the guerrilla. This was politically significant, and it seems clear that it influenced their decision. What sort of dynamic this would have unleashed and whether we would have worked closely together, neither we nor that state can really say, but the danger or the possibility (depending on your bias) existed. We, of course, hoped that this threat would have gotten more people into the discussions - but we fooled ourselves once again.

We didn't propose the process of building a counter-power from below as a short-term one, rather we wanted to begin a discussion which would involve more people than we had previously dealt with. A new discussion structure was to be developed which was to have its basis in various political associations. We wanted to re-establish on a new foundation all the ties which we had previously had with comrades in our old phase and to reject our old certainties and the deadening relationship of hierarchy.

The new ties were to be such that those with whom we were associated with would develop their own initiatives and that these would become the starting point for common discussions and praxis. For us, much of this was new ground, that which we undertook and wanted to discover. We had discussions among ourselves for an entire year, during which we constantly took on new things which had to then be partially worked under so that they could be redeveloped. This all led to a re-analysis of our praxis from our previous period, in relation to both the situation here and internationally, as well as what function the guerrilla can play in the process of social change.

To be continued in the next issue of Arm The Spirit

Letter From Spain...

ETA Round Up

At the end of March this year the ETA [Euskadi Ta Askatasuna-Basque Homeland and Liberty - Basque guerrilla organization - ed.] leadership was captured in Iparralde (French Basque country). Among them, the most important leaders are: "Pakito" (Francisco Mujika Garmendia - presented as the number 1 of the organization), "Txelis" (Jose Luis Alvarez - political apparatus) and "Fitipaldi" or "Fiti" (Jose Maria Arregi - explosives and infrastructure). Aside from these three, many other militants were also arrested in Iparralde.

What is certain is that there continues to be a lot of confusion as to what led the police on the path to arrest these three (they were meeting in a chalet when they were captured) as the police aren't saying. The mass media says the key clue came from an address book "Joseba" (Jose Luis Urrusol Sistiaga - the most sought after militant at this time) lost in mid-March in a telephone booth in a town near Barcelona. Another version says it was because of information they picked up in Catalonia province where an Etxarra [the name for an ETA militant - ed.] was arrested (on the same date that "Joseba" lost the address book, even though the media says the address book didn't reach the police for 2 or 3 days because it was found by a person who mailed it to them). According to this version, "Joseba" lost the address book precisely when he ran out of the telephone book while calling the Etxarra in Catalonia to confirm he had in fact been arrested.

The latest version says that a few weeks ago police arrested a commando group in Euskadi, who, according to the police, were preparing the helicopter escape of Etxarra prisoners in the Spanish prison at Ocaña. According to this version, it was one of the members of this commando who, while under police surveillance, gave away the location of the ETA leadership because they maintained contact with "Txelis" in Iparralde. In fact, after the commandos capture the police gave the mass media a video tape that showed "Txelis" with the member of the commando.

In short, things are pretty confusing.

Other ETA captures were those of "Pelopintxo" (finances) in a Paris airport, a few days after the arrests of "Pakito", "Fiti", "Txelis" and company. It was said "Pelopintxo" was fleeing to Mexico.

A few weeks ago there was a very big round up (of between 20 and 30 people) in Iparralde. A few days ago "Xabi de Uransolo" was arrested in Euskadi but Iglesia Chouzas ("Gadafi") was able to escape. According to police, "Xabi" and "Gadafi" were preparing a kidnapping to raise funds for the organization. "Xabi's" arrest and the later dragnet lasting several days in a rural area looking for "Gadafi", was carried out by the autonomous Basque police (Ertzaintza).

And the latest news is that of the big round up on May 16/92 in Uruguay.

Aside from these arrests, various levels of the organization in the Spanish state have fallen, including safe houses, weapons, etc.

It is clear that all these blows have done great damage to ETA. In the past, whenever there was a setback for the organization, after a short period there would be a bombing or such to demonstrate they could still attack with the same strength as before. But not this time. If memory serves me right (this may not be 100% correct), all they have done since the arrest of "Pakito", "Fiti", "Txelis" and company was a few days later they killed a police officer in Euskadi. According to the police version, 2 Etxarras were following a plainclothes cop. This cop, who had survived an ETA attack years before, went

into a bar and called police to say he was being followed. Two police officers went to investigate if this was true or not and while one stayed in the patrol car, the other went to ask the two men for their identity papers, and instead of producing their papers they pulled out their guns and killed him.

In any case, the other possibility is that they are not carrying out attacks because there are secret negotiations with the government.

Something else that came out after the leaderships capture and the fall of the Tarragona apparatus were letters which supposedly reflected a very strong polemic between "Joseba" (Urrusol Sistiaga) and the leaders of the organization. According to the media, who cite the letters, "Joseba" made disparaging remarks about "Pakito" and company to his comrades in the commandos, that after years and years in Iparralde they had lost the notion of what it was like to risk your life south of the Pyrenees, and that in general they were incompetents who had reached the top not because of their merits or real capacity but because of their friendship with the previous leadership. Another difference with the leadership was the use of car bombs, as "Joseba" advocated using them only in very concrete cases and not in the indiscriminate manner they had been used resulting in so many innocent victims. Another criticism of the ETA leadership was their omnipotence of not accepting criticism, leading the organization as if it were just their thing and not that of all its militants. According to this, critics were immediately expelled from the circle of influence in ETA and if he ("Joseba") and another of his comrades, "Pajas", weren't condemned to ostracism and formed part of the most sought after commandos, it was/is because the leadership lacks militants with good military skills and had to resort to them even if it was inconvenient. According to the letters (from a female commando member and some from "Joseba" himself) "Joseba" had also taken up the case of Txema Montero (an HB [Herri Batasuna-Popular Unity - Basque political party that is politically aligned with ETA - ed.] leader who for months has been on a second level), who had been "retired" from important posts because of his disagreements with the political coalition's line. Despite all these big differences with the leadership, if "Joseba" was still active it was because of the organization's prisoners.

To end this topic, the mass media said, from the captured documents, that because of these criticisms and others (like providing the commandos with explosives in bad condition), that "Joseba" had been summoned to a meeting with the leadership to discuss his attitude. Lately it has been published that, after the capture of "Txelis", "Fiti", "Pakito" and company, that "Joseba" could go on to occupy an important post, perhaps that of leader of the organization. In any case, all "information" from the mass media must be viewed with skepticism.

Negotiations Between The Government And Autonomous Anti-Capitalist Commando Prisoners

First, a bit of background. The CAA (Autonomous Anti-Capitalist Commandos) were born at the end of the 70's and carried out their activities until 1985, the year in which a commando that had kidnapped a Basque industrialist was arrested. Since then the organization as such no longer exists. At this time there are about 15 members in Spanish prisons, various refugees in Iparralde and



Central America. Some of their militants have joined ETA-militar [ETA split in two organizations in the early 70's, ETA-m (militar) and ETA-pm (politico-militar). ETA-pm is basically non-existent as an organization but there still are a number of ETA-pm prisoners. ETA-m is the organization that is referred to in this letter - ed.].

The origin of the Autonomous Commandos as an armed group is in the convergence of the Basque workers and anti-repressive initiatives that developed with an autonomous and/or anarcho-sindicalist manner and of members of ETA-pm (poli-milis) who were as unhappy with that groups evolution as that of ETA-m (milis). The Autonomous Commandos had their deepest roots in the northern Basque industrial regions of Valle de Urola, the Upper Deba, Gasteiz-Vitoria and Pasaia Rentaña.

At no time did the autonomists accept the KAS (Kordinadora Abertzale Sozialista) Alternative [the basic platform for an independent Basque nation - ed.] which is today composed of ETA-m, HB and their whole political retinue, because they "don't question capitalist power". The autonomists define themselves as "independists, anti-capitalists and self-managers", without exception they were against political parties (including HB), against the police in general (including the Ertzaintza who, Basque as they may be, did not stop being police. In fact, at first KAS saw the establishment of the Ertzaintza as a good thing), etc. Proof of their radicalism is that they not only acted against collaborationist unions of capital (like CC.OO and ELA-STV) within the labour conflicts they acted from a general anti-capitalist perspective, while the mili's did not take part in these struggles and the poli-mili's did so to help in negotiations. An example of the autonomists' perspective would be their actions against executives of Moulinex, Michelin, etc., kidnapping businessmen, etc. Another difference they had with respect to the mili's and poli mili's was in their anti-repressive actions. They didn't concentrate on "bulk" actions against the police, but they also attacked those politically responsible (even though they also, naturally, acted against the police). It was precisely these actions against politicians and parties which most irritated ETA and HB, already upset at the existence of a Basque guerrilla organization that did not submit to their strategy. The drop that overflowed the glass was the death, at the autonomists' hands, of PSOE [Socialist Workers' Party of Spain, presently the ruling party in Spain - ed.] senator Enrique Casas, directly implicated in the imposition of extreme police measures in Euskal Herria [Basque nation - ed.]. As to the execution of the senator, even HB joined the rest of the political parties and unions in calling for a general strike to show they

were against the action. The electoralist interests of the Abertzale coalition made HB create in the rest of the supposedly enemy parties a climate of "All the people against the CAA" who backed the assassination, a few months later (March 22, 1984) of CAA members: "Rafa", "Txapas", "Kurro" and "Pelitxo". It was in the Bay of Pasaia where 4 of 5 members of a commando (there was 1 survivor) fell in a police ambush. This commando was presented as "menbeku" ("revenge" in Euskara [the Basque language - ed.]), the one which had killed Enrique Casas and in fact, the survivor, Joseba Merino, is still in prison, convicted of this action (among others). Aside from the four activists mentioned, other fatal casualties of the organization have been "Naparra" (also known as "Bakunin"), who disappeared in Ipparalde, kidnapped by a fascist group linked to the Guardia Civil, and 2 other militants killed by a bomb they were making.

Another of the autonomists' criticism of the mili's was ETA's desire to want to lead and direct the Basque revolutionary process, while the CAA's were parties to actions (in all senses, including armed) that were popular, without separation of tasks nor the existence of leaders-obedient masses.

All of this "historic introduction" is so you can better understand why ETA (but more so HB and their associates) considered the autonomists to be, in practice, political enemies, why they were upset and why they were probably very happy at the CAA's collapse, despite the fact that this meant several of their members died at the hands of the police.

In the time they were active and even now, the slogan followed by the mass media (except of course Egin [Basque newspaper which supports Basque sovereignty - ed.] and a few others, but Egin totally or partially censored CAA communiques) was to identify the CAA as a "branch" of ETA-m, which neither one wanted apparently.

Once again we have the historical background, let's go on to the polemics of "negotiation". I don't recall the exact date, if it started at the end of last year ('91) or the beginning of this one ('92), but Egin published an article in which a person, "Cabra", was proposing a general renunciation of the autonomous Basque prisoners; in practice he was identified as a government infiltrator, a paid informer. According to the article, the CAA refugees did not know anything about such a manoeuvre, except one of them who would be whoever published the matter, being totally against it.

After this article the prisoner family members sent Egin a communique to contradict the focus of the paper. Egin published the communique but next to it added a part reconfirming its previous version.

From Euskadi the version of the comrades carrying out the "negotiations" from overseas, is as follows: effectively, there is contact with the government and they have started to talk, the prisoners knew it and things did not go beyond contact with nothing more happening, not exactly negotiations as such. Prisoners as well as refugees knew about the matter from the beginning and were in agreement and, generally, waiting to get to a good point. Thus it is clear that HB, through its Egin mouthpiece, wanted to poison the matter from the beginning, faced with the "danger" that negotiations would be arrived at beyond its control. From there to present the contacts as the manoeuvres of the government through a "peoa" [?-trans.] (Cabra), when in reality it was something already agreed upon by those most affected (basically the prisoners themselves) from the beginning with the participation with various comrades and family members; presenting it as Cabra's plan, that of just one person, is to emphasize the subject's sinister theme.

- When the "news" was published there were no negotiations (logically, at this time we don't know how things are going), it was simply a contact with no concrete agree-

ments.

- All of the Basque autonomous prisoners, refugees and deportees backed the talks. That, according to Egin, the refugees and deportees didn't know of the talks and one of them publicly denounced the "government's strategy" is a bald-faced lie.

- The prisoners are not naive. They are aware that if the government decides to establish negotiations, as such and from there concede some type of release or substantial improvements in the prison situation, it would publicize it at the most convenient time. The government would take advantage of the situation to present the question as one of "we're hard" and "soft" or something similar. We know this.

- Even then, if the talks reach negotiations and through it they obtain something they consider opportune, the prisoners have been clear they will not sign a "repentance" in Italian style nor a renunciation of armed struggle as such, aside from the considerations on the guerrilla organization CAA.

That's what's happening now, we'll inform you how the matter ends.

The Escape Of Fernando Silva Sande

The escape from Granada prison of Fernando Silva, well-known member of GRAPO [communist guerrilla organization - ed.], clouded the joy felt by the government and the mass media over the ETA captures in France as it happened a few hours after those arrests. Despite the classicness of the means (digging a tunnel) it was very effective. At this time Silva is still being sought. The hysteria of the government and mass media is such that they claim Silva participates in half the crimes committed in Spain! If they're not careful they'll soon start blaming him for attacks that occurred while he was in prison. The media claims Silva participated in the actions of April 30/92 by GRAPO in Madrid and a heist with a take of 20 million pesetas at a toll booth on a highway in the eastern coastal zone.

The April 30 attack was a bombing of the Labour Ministry (extensive material and morale damage; and 2 Guardia Civil injured) and another in the headquarters of the National Institute of Industry (state organization of public industries), both in Madrid. The morale damage is because one bomb was placed in the bathroom a few meters from the Labour Minister's office, mocking all their security measures.

What is interesting is that the GRAPO communique was in an incredibly "neutral" revolutionary tone. Neutral in the sense that it isn't in the orthodox Leninist sense, as they usually are, nor refer to Marxism-Leninism, the Party, etc. Naturally it was signed by the Central Committee, as always. They ascribe the actions to opposition to the new government laws which eliminate many workers' rights (strike laws, decree cutting unemployment compensation, etc.) They did it April 30, the day before May Day and made a call to the unions (peaceful and domesticated) CC.OO, UGT and such to give real opposition to these policies, to show radical opposition (by sabotage and similar means) to this plan by capital and the government.

Call For A General Strike

In recent months the government has taken forward some initiatives (strike laws and cutting the unemployment stipend) which in one blow sweep away workers' rights gained after years and years of workers' struggle, the self-proclaimed "workers" party has the guts to take such anti-worker measures that not even the extreme right would have dared to do.

With the strike law they openly seek to control all strikes from the beginning. To carry out a strike it will be necessary to go through various bureaucratic hoops which try to avoid, at all costs, that the strike become

uncontrollable. But in this case most of the domesticated unions are silent because it gives them even more power and the law guarantees, or tries to guarantee, that no radical struggle takes place in the labour world that could escape their control.

Thus the collaborator unions, workers' commissions (the CC.OO, linked to the PCE [Communist Party of Spain, Eurocommunist and reformist - ed.] and as such to the united left which is a coalition of parties with the PCE at its head). And the General Workers' Union (UGT, linked to the government itself) reserve their hypocritical vitriol for the cutting of unemployment pay. Prior to this decree-law, to get the subsidy after the job had been lost and a person was unemployed, it was only necessary to have 6 months of legal work to get 3 months of subsidy. Now it is necessary to work for 1 year to get subsidy for only 4 months. As you can see this is a very singular proportion as before with a year of work you could get 6 months of subsidy if you were unemployed. The decree also affects retirement pay as well.

The government tries to justify this decree by saying that the unemployment subsidy is an enormous expense for the state which doesn't allow it to spend money on "higher priorities" according to them. It is true that, effectively the state spends too much money (in the cost of public administration, the creation of commissions and organisms which don't do anything, in celebrations and all the privileges and perks that certain government officials, their friends and family get, on corruption, etc.). All of this in the administration as well as that of the towns and provinces. So when the government talks about "tightening our belts" it is clear that when they say "our" they mean "your".

The pantomime of the unions collaborating with capital, the CC.OO and UGT as minority "colleagues" is to make a gesture presented as scandalous and radical when in reality it's nothing but another scene in the great spectacle of capital. That gesture is the call for a national strike (for only half a day - 4 hours) for the 28th of May. And planning for a complete day - 8 hours - a few months later if an agreement isn't reached with the government. It is clear the government isn't going to retreat on this. What do they care about billions of pesetas in losses from a half day strike if by cutting the unemployment subsidy they'll save far more? Their electoral interests? Perhaps that interests them a little more, but we have to admit something: the PSOE has practically no parliamentary opposition and the popular opposition aims at promoting electoral abstention. It is quite probable that within this absurd spectacle, this ridiculous charade, the government will make public a detail, perhaps repeal part of the decree (it would not be unusual if it had already agreed to this with the unions) but only that, some unimportant aspect that will be cut to "demonstrate" that the government and capital aren't intransigent and that the sell-out unions are good for something, but nothing more. It's really pathetic, a real shit.

From comrades in Spain.

...Ocalan interview continued from page 3
which will be very disadvantageous for them.

War scenes are being shown on Turkish television and in the press. How do you evaluate this?

For the enemy the war is intensifying and for us the guerrilla war is coming to the stage of an all-out popular uprising. This is an important stage. It gives us the possibility of reaching equilibrium in the war. We will dedicate all our forces to the struggle and believe our people will be the victors in this war.

(From Berxwedan - Kurdish newspaper - 92/10/24)

Letters...

It is a tactic of oppressive governments to deny the existence of political prisoners and prisoners of war. By criminalizing their actions, they successfully delegitimize the struggles of the prisoners and they are kept serving impossible sentences. The radical movement recognizes the need to support these prisoners and their organizations, to keep their struggles alive. But the movement is also making a grave mistake with their practice of making distinctions between political prisoners and social prisoners. Not only does this error create and perpetuate crippling divisions in the struggle against the oppressive political system, but it also negates the political nature of prisons in general. Even worse, it undermines the potential of the resistance/revolutionary movement.

Factual statistics reveal that currently, Canada has the second highest rate of incarceration in the western world. The U.S. is leading, with 426 persons in jail out of every 100,000 persons. This makes it highly obvious that so-called liberal-democratic governments maintain control using their laws, the courts, and prisons. And if we consider just who are imprisoned we are left with no doubt as to why the populations of prisons and the number of prisons is increasing - prison are the ultimate expression of the oppressive regimes.

An analysis of the populations of prisons will show that there are indeed many who are incarcerated because of their political beliefs and actions. But when we consider who the majority of prisoners are, we also see that while there are certainly a few who possess a truly malevolent or criminal nature, the criminal behaviours of the majority are but symptoms of deeper disturbances. These disturbances are in effect created by the capitalist democratic environment and its rulers.

Not many prisoners will claim that their intentions were to become murderers, robbers, or sexual perverts. Why then do people resort to such extreme and negative behaviour? In reality, these so-called criminals do not have, as other will claim, actual free choices in their decisions. Some have had their choices made for them in their infancy or childhood. Others form their concepts from what amount to social ills of an oppressive political order. The majority of prisoners are therefore, products of the social and economic order maintained by such political malaise as violence, unemployment, racism, and class and gender divisions. What is necessary in order to change these socio-economic conditions then is to first resist the political order. Only then will the rapidly increasing populations of prisons and penal institutions decrease.

Never should we minimize the importance of the struggle of freedom fighters and their organizations; especially those who have been imprisoned. These people have led the effort to resist and overthrow the political order in their various struggles; fighting for justice for Blacks, Puerto Rican Independence Movements, resistance and revolutionary movements of all kinds. Their legitimacy and struggles cannot be emphasized enough! However, we must ask here, how do we determine, given the previously mentioned analysis, who are the freedom fighters and where do they come from? And whose actions are of a political nature? And whose actions are simply criminal?

Observations concerned with who are in prisons conclude that prisons are an extension of the political system. The reasons people are in prisons is because of social and economic conditions. Consider the following: When unemployment coupled with drug addiction causes an individual to engage in unlawful acts, is that person not a product of economic and social ills? And therefore of the malaise of the political order?



Is it not the politics of the justice system that criminalizes drug addiction, alcoholism, unemployment, poverty, and even disabilities? When an illiterate member of an impoverished minority in desperation resorts to robbery or steals to feed and clothe his or her family, is this person a mere criminal? Or does this persons act of self-determination and simple survival come under the category of freedom fighting?

If we consider the nature of each and every prisoner's actions, are we not able to determine some type of politic underlying their intentions? Again, we must conclude that we can no longer make a distinction between types of prisoners, neither should we categorize their actions to be strictly criminal or strictly political. Not if we are to build a strong and united movement to ultimately question and overthrow the order that already thrives on divisions of race, class, and gender.

A consequence of the growing political movement against racism, militarism, imperialism and for the basic tenets of justice is a progressive and alternative media. This media has been an important source of information and support for political prisoners and prisoners of war who fight what often appear to be fruitless struggles. However, by perpetuating the distinctions between prisoners, this media negates the political nature of prisons. It also maintains the already debilitating divisions within prisons and society that it claims to denounce. Furthermore, this media is excluding a majority of prisoners from a growing movement that could fight oppression in all its forms. In effect, the progressive media could be an educational tool to empower prisoners and provoke the transformation of the criminal mentality to a revolutionary one. As recently stated by a member of the anarchist/autonomous movement, "we should make prisoner support work a higher priority then it has been in the past. After all, all militants/revolutionaries are potential prisoners." It follows then that prisoners are also potential militants and revolutionaries.

As all prisoners need to develop their sense of worth through a struggle for liberty, equality, and self-determination, so does the progressive movement and media need to change their perspective regarding distinctions between prisoners. A much larger and thus stronger movement would result from the elimination of the distinctions/divisions within the prisons. Prisoners already face a seemingly powerless position instilled by the process of the justice system and oppressive governments. Only after eliminating the present distinctions made between prisoners will there be a united and effective political/revolutionary movement.

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...News In Brief continued from page 6

Segueira. Sequeira, who was killed in the northwestern Nicaraguan city of Leon, was the president of the Association of the Confiscated, a group of Nicaraguans who are attempting to reclaim land that been appropriated under the FSLN's land reform programs. Until the action had been claimed by the FPI on 9/21/26, the president of the rightwing business group COSEP, Ramiro Gurdian, held the Sandinistas responsible. The FPI which describes itself as an "anti-imperialist, Marxist and Leninist organization" states that it has been in existence for two years. On 9/21/26, two bombings took place in Managua, one near the U.S. embassy, which were claimed by the FPI. In the accompanying communique, they threatened kill politicians who are continuing to "play with the people's hunger and who aggravate the domestic crisis." When claiming the November 23rd action, the FPI threatened Gurdian and other right wing politicians and business executives and stated that they wanted to rescue "the conquests of the Sandinista revolution." (NSN Weekly Update #142 & #148)...

...Power Poles Sabotaged continued from page 5

be fined \$10,000 and imprisoned for up to 20 years. Another federal law prohibits the destruction of an energy facility and carries a penalty of \$50,000 and 10 years in jail.

Glenn Gershaneck, spokesperson for Governor Howard Dean, said the news had upset the governor who felt that it was the first time that acts of potential violence like this had occurred in Vermont.

The contract between Hydro-Quebec and 17 Vermont utilities (CVPS has the largest contract for H-Q power) has been the subject of controversy for several years. Opponents argue that the Canadian utility's expansion plans threaten the indigenous lifestyle of the Cree, Inuit, and Innu peoples who live in northern Quebec. Environmentalists say that Hydro-Quebec's plans threaten fragile habitats and the future of some species of migratory fowl, fresh-water seals, beluga whales, caribou, etc. Opponents have also argued that Vermont does not need the power from H-Q, and that the contract is a disincentive to conservation efforts.

(Biodiversity Liberation Front-Earth First)

...Klar's Trial Statement continued from page 21

Left. And it has to be the (self)education of left organizations involved in armed struggle to empower the individuals and the whole group to put these principles to practice.

Christian Klar

Stammheim, September '92

(From Angehörigen-Info #101)

...Resistance At Lexington continued from page 18

Anger is a constant reality in prison, and the entire system is designed to ensure that such anger is turned inwards, destroying one's self-respect and humanity, instead of being turned outwards towards the system and the oppressors. It took courage to resist all that, in the context of the total control, abuse and disrespect of women that constitutes women's prison. We had to trust each other, that we would not be standing there alone. As we looked around at one another, we knew our demonstration was a victory, no matter what punishment might follow. A small flame of power, sisterhood, and dignity had been rekindled.

Laura Whitehorn, Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner

Literature Available From Arm The Spirit

Magazines/Newsletters

Beag Inis

A small anti-imperialist newsletter from Montreal, Quebec. **FREE**

Breakthrough

The political journal of the anti-imperialist Prairie Fire Organizing Committee which focuses on national liberation struggles, political prisoners and much more. \$3.00

Crossroad: A New Afrikan Captured Combatant Newsletter

News, analysis and discussion by and about Black/New Afrikan political prisoners and prisoners of war. \$3.00

Democratic Palestine

A quarterly english-language magazine focussing on the Palestinian liberation struggle as well as other revolutionary movements in the Middle East and beyond. \$2.00

Love And Rage

A revolutionary anarchist newspaper with a strong focus on anti-racism, lesbian and gay liberation as well providing news on many other struggles in North America and elsewhere. \$1.00

No KKK, No Fascist USA

An anti-racist/anti-fascist magazine published by the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee. \$1.00

Oh-To-Kin

A First Nations newspaper with its most recent issue focussing on Native peoples in prison. \$2.00

Prison News Service

With the bulk of its content written by prisoners, PNS is one of the best sources of information on prisons in North America. \$1.00

Prison Legal News

Along with PNS, this an excellent source of information on prisons in the U.S. with particular emphasis on legal information and resources for prisoners. \$1.00

Revolutionary Left - Against Imperialism And Fascism

The english-language political review of Devrimci Sol (Revolutionary Left), a Turkish communist political-military organization active since the late 70's. \$3.00

Ordering Information

Postage: Surface mail postage costs in North America are 20% of the total cost of the order with a \$1.00 minimum. It's 30% for airmail in North America or surface mail overseas (\$2.00 minimum). Airmail outside of North America is 40% (\$3.00 minimum).

Payment: We accept well concealed cash (preferably U.S., Canadian, British or German currency) or postal money orders. No cheques! Please make money orders out to Arm The Spirit with our full mailing address.

Availability: We do not always have the above-listed items in stock, so please list alternates. Back issues of certain magazines are available.

Books/Pamphlets

Armed Insurrection

A. Neuberg

A fascinating and well-documented book on armed uprisings and political-military strategies in the early part of this century. Originally published in German in 1928 this illegal (at that time) book was commissioned by the Comintern to serve as a guide for communists organizing towards armed proletarian insurrection. (Photocopy Only) **\$7.00**

Armed Struggle In Italy 1976-78: A Chronology

This extensive chronology is a good overview of the various forms of revolutionary struggle and resistance that took place in Italy in the mid-70's. Elephant Editions **\$5.00**

Bottomfish Blues: Voice For The Amazon Nation

An uncompromising and relentless attack on racism and patriarchy is found in the pages of this now-defunct magazine. We have photocopies of issues 4 and 5 (combined into one) which includes "RZ= Feminist Guerrillas", "Lords And Warlords Of Central Park", "Women And Children In The Armed Struggle" and much more. We are selling photocopies of Bottomfish Blues because back issues in their original form are no longer available. (Photocopy Only) **\$2.00**

A Brief History Of The New Afrikan Prison Struggle

Sundiata Acoli

This segment of history from the New Afrikan liberation movement focuses on those "behind the walls" who have fought for the liberation of Black people in the United States. SAFC (Photocopy Only) **\$1.50**

Chronicles Of Dissent

Noam Chomsky & David Barsamian

A collection of interviews by radio journalist David Barsamian with noted writer and political activist Noam Chomsky. AK Press/Common Courage Press **\$19.00**

False Nationalism False Internationalism: Class Contradictions In The Armed Struggle

E. Tani & Kaé Sera

A historical and analytical overview of some of the alliances made between revolutionaries from white oppressor nations and oppressed nations. Its primary critique is that of the relationship between white anti-imperialists and New Afrikan revolutionaries in the U.S. from the 60's up until today. "The primary contradiction within the U.S. Empire is between imperialism and the oppressed nations. National and class contradictions, which are not completely separate but interrelated, continue to grow sharper within the U.S. Empire. Indeed, the ebbing of the '60s protest movements could not stop or even slow the growth of national contradictions." - from the introduction Seeds Beneath The Snow **\$8.50**

Herstory Of The Revolutionary Cells And Rote Zora

Avanti Militanti

A brief introduction to two German autonomous guerrilla groups. BARA **\$1.00**

International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement

ed. Albert Meltzer

A short history of the "First of May Group" - an anarchist guerrilla organization that fought against the fascist regime in Spain in the 60's and 70's. Cienfuegos Press **\$3.00**

Strike One To Educate One Hundred: The Rise Of The Red Brigades In Italy In The 1960s-1970s

Chris Aronson Beck, Reggie Emilia, Lee Morris, Ollie Patterson

The Red Brigades arose out of the worker-student revolts of '68 and grew throughout the 70's into a powerful guerrilla organization that shook the foundations of the Italian capitalist system. This book covers their early years and provides extensive documentation from the Red Brigades themselves. Seeds Beneath The Snow **\$8.50**

This Bridge Called My Back: Writings By Radical Women Of Color

Ed. Cherrie Moraga & Gloria Anzaldúa

A collection of prose, poetry, personal narrative and analysis that reflects an uncompromised definition of feminism by women of colour. Kitchen Table: Women Of Color Press **\$13.00**

Towards People's War For Independence And Socialism In Puerto Rico: In Defense Of Armed Struggle

Originally published in 1979, this collection of communiques and documents from both the mass revolutionary organizations and the armed clandestine movement gives an excellent overview of the Puerto Rican struggle for self-determination in the 60's and 70's. Long out of print, we offer it here in photocopied form. (Photocopy Only) **\$2.50**

Unfinished Business: The Politics Of Class War

Class War Federation

Unfinished Business, collectively written by the British-based organization, Class War, argues for "the re-creation of an independent revolutionary movement within the working class, under the control of no one but themselves, inspired by the best traditions of unity and solidarity." AK Press **\$9.00**

West-German Repression Of The Women's Movement

A documentation of the arrest and trials in the late 80's of Ingrid Strobl and Ulla Penselin, feminists active in the campaign against gene and reproductive technology. (Photocopy Only) **\$4.00**



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